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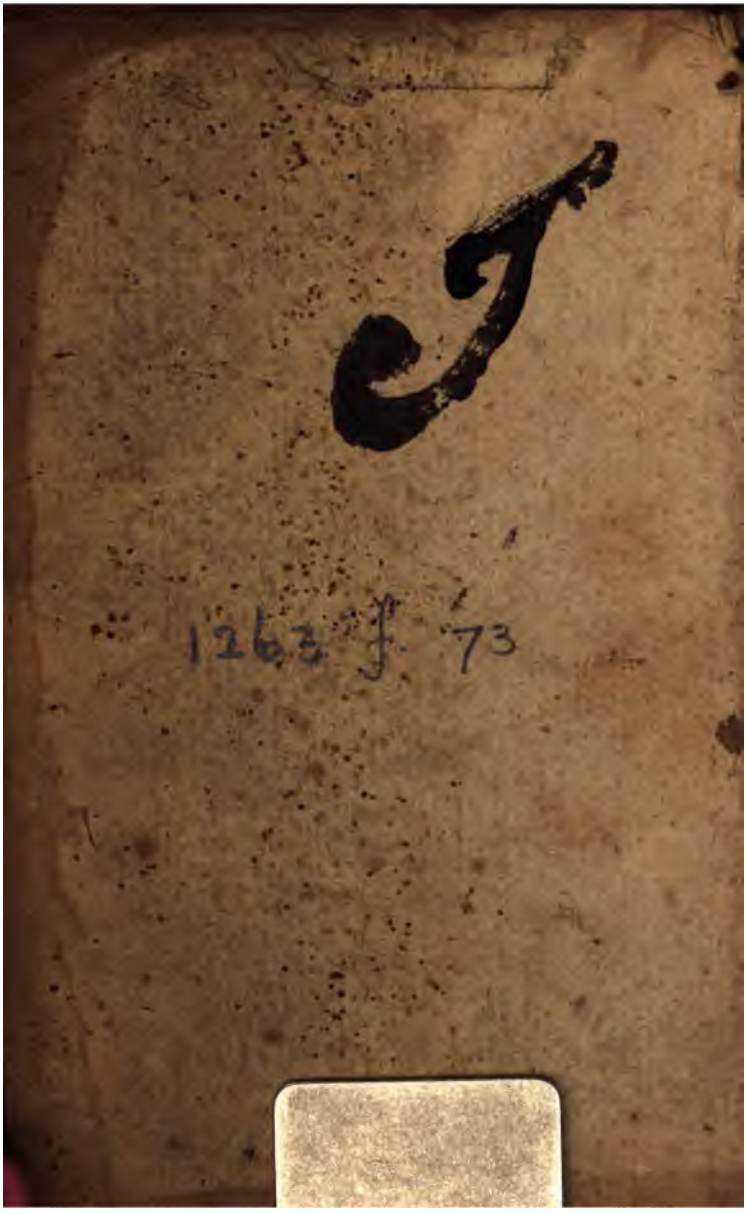
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A

SACRAMENTAL CATECHISM:

OR, A

FAMILIAR INSTRUCTOR

FOR

YOUNG COMMUNICANTS.

Plainly unfolding the Nature of the

COVENANT OF GRACE,

With the Two Seals thereof,

BAPTISM and the LORD's SUPPER.

WHEREIN

Especially the Sacrament of the LORD's SUPPER is fully and diſtinctly handled, both in a Doctrinal and Practical Manner;

With many CASES of CONSCIENCE relative thereto, intermixed and reſolved, for the Relief and Support of thoſe who are exerciſed to Godlineſs.

With an APPENDIX,

Containing ſuitable Materials for Meditation and Prayer, both before and after Partaking.

By Mr. JOHN WILLISON,
Miniſter of the Goſpel at Dundee.

GLASGOW:
PRINTED BY DAVID NIVEN.
1794.

11·5·1912

THE

PREFACE

TO THE

READER.

ALTHOUGH it cannot be denied that there are many excellent books written, and ſermons delivered concerning the *Lord's Supper;* yet it is ſadly to be regreted, that there remains ſtill a lamentable ignorance, among many, of the nature of this holy ordinance, and the principal acts required in communicating. Which conſideration chiefly hath moved me to handle this ſubject (of which too much cannot be written or preached, ſeeing it is the epitome of the whole Chriſtian religion, both as to doctrine and practice) in a plain catechetical method, and have ſtudied the eaſieſt words and expreſſions that I could deviſe, to make the nature of the *covenant of grace*, and the ſeals thereof, plain and intelligible to every vulgar capacity.

As I do not know much that is written upon this ſubject, in this method, ſo I have obſerved in treatiſes of the *Lord's Supper*, that generally there is but little ſaid of the nature of the *covenant of works* with the firſt Adam, or of the *covenant of redemption* with the ſecond Adam, or of the *covenant of grace* with the elect, to which this Sacrament is annexed as a ſeal: and that yet leſs is ſaid of the ſacrament of baptiſm, the firſt ſeal of the covenant; which certainly ſhould, in the firſt place be conſidered and underſtood by every man, before he adventure to partake of the ſecond ſeal of the covenant, which bears a ſpecial relation to the firſt. Wherefore I have thought fit, in this catechiſm (for the better underſtanding the nature of this ſacrament) to give a ſuccinct view of the goſpel ſcheme, and method of man's ſalvation, by opening up the nature of the foreſaid divine covenant, and of the ſacrament of baptiſm before I come to treat particularly of the *Lord's Supper*.

All Chriſtians ſhould ſtudy to have diſtinct uptakings of the goſpel-covenant, and of this ordinance, which is the compend and ſeal of it; and in a ſpecial manner young perſons before their firſt admiſſion to it, when they are hereby, in a ſolemn and explicit manner, to renew their baptiſmal bonds, and give their voluntary conſent to the covenant. O young people, take heed to your firſt communicating, for very much depends upon it; you are as it were, about laying the foundation-ſtone of your ſalvation-work, which ought to be done with much ſpiritual ſkill and knowledge, if you would have a ſure building; if you approach to this holy table in ignorance, you ſtumble in the threſhold; nay, you will ſurely be unworthy communicants, and ſo may provoke God to ſmite you with the plagues of judicial blindneſs, heart-hardneſs, and formality, which may cleave to you all your lives, and ſo you are undone for ever. Wherefore, as you regard your immortal ſouls, pray for knowledge and ſpiritual illumination; apply to your great prophet Jeſus Chriſt for it; improve the means and helps which he affords you, and ſeriouſly peruſe this catechiſm, before you firſt communicate; that ſo you may get ſome right uptakings of the nature of the covenant of grace, and the ſeals thereof; and particularly, of the obligations you already lie under by the firſt ſeal, that you may with knowledge, ſeriouſneſs and ſolemnity, go, and perſonally renew your baptiſmal covenant with God, and get it ratified, by receiving of the ſecond ſeal thereof. For this cauſe it is that our national Aſſembly, by their act, Aſſ. 1706, ſeſſ. 12. do recommend to all miniſters, 'diligently to inſtruct perſons, 'eſpecially before their admiſſion to the Lord's ſupper, particularly as to the covenant of grace, and the nature and end 'of that ordinance as a ſeal thereof; and charge upon their 'conſciences the obligations they lie under from their bap'tiſmal covenant, and ſeriouſly to exhort them to renew the 'ſame.' And accordingly, I have known ſome miniſters, at very much pains with young perſons before their firſt communicating, inſtructing them as above directed, telling them, that they were now to enter into the ſtate of adult church membership, to be taken into Chriſt's family, and ſhare of the childrens privileges, ſealed to them in baptiſm; that therey muſt now make a choice for themſelves, ratify their deed, and become Chriſtians by their own voluntary , as well as by their parents dedication, and renew

their baptiſmal covenant with judgment and underſtandi
And after much pains taken upon them in private, t
have called theſe young communicants together in a
blic manner, catechiſing them, and opening up the natur
the goſpel-covenant, and their baptiſmal engagements to th
and with ſome ſolemnity aſking each of them their conſ
thereunto, and taking them engaged perſonally to renew c
nant with God in ſecret, and make choice of God for t
God, and Chriſt for their Saviour and huſband, before t
ſhould approach to his table, and upon theſe terms giv
them their tokens. Unto all which they joined ſuitable
rections and encouragements, concluding all, by giving up
recommending theſe young communicants to God in ſole
and fervent prayer Which method I have known accom
nied with great tenderneſs, and many tears, among the yo
people; one of them helping to affect another, yea, and m
very moving impreſſions upon the whole audience; and
doubt not, but ſuch occaſions have been to ſome, the time
their eſpouſals to the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which they are
remember with thankfulneſs and praiſe.

Moreover, I intreat young communicants to beware of c
tenting themſelves with a literal knowledge of the doctrine
the covenants, and of the ſacraments; but O preſs and p
hard for the inward teachings of God's Spirit, that light
your heads may be joined with heat in your hearts. A
pray for the firm and ſolid belief, and ſincere love of all th
truths which you know; and that your knowledge may b
ſanctified and practical knowledge, and increaſing, like
morning light.

Again, I beſeech you to beware of reſting upon your p
poſes, prayers or tears, your perſonal covenanting, or any p
formance of yours whatſomever: Let none of theſe come
Chriſt's room; be not ſatisfied with a form of godlineſs wi
out ſeeking after the life and power thereof. Be never e
till you get your hearts opened to cloſe with Jeſus Chriſt
the goſpel-offers; and get an inward change wrought up
your ſouls, by the regenerating grace and Spirit of God, a
grace excited in you to lively exerciſe; and then you may
proach with holy confidence to your Redeemer's table, a
expect welcome.

Sacrament days in Scotland have been ſolemn and ſeali
days, yea, days of heaven to many; at ſuch occaſions ma

have had their tryſts, and Bethel meetings with God, which they will never forget. O let us all then beware of formality creeping in among us in our preparation for, and partaking of this ſolemn ordinance; for then God will withdraw himſelf from our aſſemblies, and our ſolemn feaſts will be melancholly and heartleſs. How ſad will our caſe be, if communicants and profeſſors of religion turn eaſy about this matter, and be ſatisfied with the ſhadow without the ſubſtance: with pure ordinances and ſacraments, without Chriſt's preſence in them; with communion days, without communion with Chriſt the maſter and maker of the feaſt. O communicants, however frequently you approach to the Lord's table, yet ſtill make conſcience of ſecret, ſerious, and ſolemn preparation for it; preſs always for a token of Chriſt's love at his table. There is nothing ſo ſupporting to poor believers, in this wilderneſs, yea, and when under the greateſt trials and difficulties, than the believing views they have ſometimes got, of a well ordered covenant of grace, made over and ſealed to them by this ſacrament: theſe have been the cordials of many, when they have been ſtepping in over the threſhold of eternity. Let us then be providing ſuch cordials againſt that critical time.

At firſt, when I fell to compoſe this book, I thought to contain it in a ſmall compaſs; but having a deſign to inſtruct, direct, and confirm ſome; confute, reprove and reform others; the book ſwelled to this bulk, before I could in any meaſure reach my end.

1ſt, My deſign is, to inſtruct the ignorant, in the knowledge of the goſpel way and method of ſalvation, through the mediation and ſuretiſhip of Jeſus Chriſt; and therefore I was obliged to give ſuch, as clear a view as I could, of the covenants of works, of redemption, and of grace, with the ſeals thereof.

2dly, I intend to direct and aſſiſt all ſincere young communicants, that deſire to be rightly guided in this weighty work, ſo as they may not wound Chriſt nor their own ſouls, but pleaſe God and get a gracious meeting with their Saviour; and for their ſakes I have fully diſplayed the nature, parts, ends and uſes of the Lord's ſupper, ſhewed what is required of them before they come, what is incumbent on them when they come, and what is incumbent on them when they go from the Lord's table; and alſo have ſubjoined to this book,

ſome ſuitable materials for meditation and prayer, both before and after partaking.

3dly, My end is to ſupport and encourage theſe troubled and exercifed ſouls, who dare not neglect this ordinance, and who make conſcience of attending it, and preparing for it, but are oft filled with doubts and fears, leſt they be unworthy communicants, apprehending they have no right to Chriſt's table, in regard they do not perceive any ſure marks of grace in their hearts, nor find any ſenſible benefit by the ordinance: wherefore, I have for the ſake of ſuch, laid down many marks for examining their ſtate, their graces, their frame, and profiting by this ordinance: and alſo have intermixed the book with a great variety of caſes of conſcience, which I have handled and reſolved for the relief and ſupport of ſuch ſerious ſouls.

4thly, I deſign to confute thoſe who corrupt this holy ordinance, or in any meaſure deviate from Chriſt's inſtitution; and therefore, I have gone through the ſeveral parts of the inſtitution, ſhown the uſefulneſs and ſignificancy thereof, and have fairly propoſed the matters in controverſy, with the adverſaries objections, and anſwered them.

5thly, I aim to reprove and reform thoſe who ruſh upon this ordinance in an ignorant or careleſs manner, without due preparation; by ſhewing who only have a right to this table, what is the nature and importance of the work of communicating, with the ſin and danger of doing it unworthily.

6thly, I intend likewiſe to reprove thoſe who live in the habitual neglect of this ordinance; by laying open the neceſſity and advantages of worthy communicating, and the guilt and hazard of neglecting Chriſt's inſtitution and dying command.

7thly, To reprove thoſe who ſatisfy themſelves with communicating once in a year or two years, as they have the occaſion only in their own pariſh kirks, and no oftner; By ſhewing the obligations that lye on all Chriſt's diſciples to partake often. And I ſhall add in this place, that there is ground to fear, that the unfrequent celebration and participation of this bleſſed feaſt which Chriſt hath prepared for us, is an evil that many in this church are chargeable with; and for which the Lord may plead a controverſy with us. How can we expect but he will depart from us, when we ſtand at ſuch a diſtance from him, and come ſo ſeldom near him in the method he hath appointed? Can we look for the ſmiles of Chriſt's countenance when we live ſo much in the neglect of his dying words?

it any wonder our hearts are so hard, when we are so seldom applying the blood of Christ for softning them? Or that our graces be so weak and withered, when we so little use the means for strengthening and cherishing them? Is not the frequent use of this ordinance, in the way Christ hath appointed, an excellent help, to soften our hearts, renew our repentance, strengthen our faith, inflame our love, increase our thankfulness, animate our resolutions against sin, and encourage us to holy duties, and shall we willingly neglect it? It is no wonder that we complain we miss what we aim at, and expect in this ordinance, when we are so little sensible of former neglects. It is a sad sign, our receiving of this sacrament is not right, when it leaves not in us earnest breathings for the like opportunity; Is it possible for us to meet with Christ, and taste of his sweetness and fulness in this ordinance, and not long for another meeting?

Let none think, that the frequency of the administration would expose to contempt; for I am sure no worthy communicant will undervalue this ordinance, because of a frequent repetition, but rather prize it the more. Did the primitive Christians bring it to contempt by partaking every Lord's day? Nay, was not their esteem of it much higher than those who dispense, or receive it only once in two years? I wish, the words of our dying Saviour, and the acts of our General Assembly, relative to this matter, were more adverted to, by one and all of us.

The mind of our church, with respect to this point, is well known; for our Directory for public worship declares 'that the Lord's supper is frequently to be celebrated.' Our reformers appointed it to be administrate in parishes three or four times in the year, and that ministers who were slothful in the administration of it, should be censured, as appears from the acts of Ass. 1562, and 1596; which are also approven by Ass. 1638, who further appoint, 'that some course be taken 'for furnishing of the elements, where the minister of the pa-'rish hath allowance only for once in the year;' that so the want of a fund for communion elements, might not hinder the frequent administration of this ordinance. Again, lest the multiplicity of preaching, or ministers assisting at it, should hinder its frequency, the General Assembly, anno 1645, did point, 'that ministers should have at this work, but two 'assistants, who were to provide their own parishes at home

'with preaching; and that there be but one preparation-ſermon on the Saturday, only one ſermon on the Sabbath-morning before ſerving the tables, and one thankſgiving ſermon after the communion.'

And that the church, ſince the Revolution, continues to be of the ſame mind with our predeceſſors, concerning the frequency of celebrating this ordinance, appears from the late acts of the General Aſſembly thereanent; particularly the 9th act of Aſſ. 1701, where it is recommended to preſbyteries, 'To 'take care that the ſacrament of the Lord's ſupper be more 'frequently adminiſtrate in their bounds; and that the number of miniſters to ſerve thereat be reſtricted, ſo that neighbouring churches be not thereby caſt deſolate on the Lord's 'day.' But the act, which is moſt plain and particular on this head is the 11th act of Aſſ. 1712, entitled, 'Act appointing the more frequent celebration of the Lord's ſupper.' And it runs thus, 'The General Aſſembly conſidering that 'the Aſſemblies of this national church have, by ſeveral acts 'apointed the frequent celebration of the holy ſacrament of 'the Lord's ſupper, in all the congregations of this church; 'and judging, that the due obſervation of theſe acts will 'greatly tend to the glory of God, and the edification of ſouls; 'therefore, they do hereby enjoin all preſbyteries to enquire, 'if theſe acts be duly obſerved by all the brethren; and in 'caſe any miniſter ſhall neglect to celebrate the ſacrament of 'the Lord's ſupper, in his pariſh for a whole year, the Aſ'ſembly appoints the preſbytery in which the ſaid pariſh lyes, 'to call for an account of the reaſons of his omiſſion of that 'great and ſolemn ordinance, and to approve or diſapprove 'the ſame, as they ſhall ſee cauſe, and to record their dili'gence in this matter. And for making this effectual, the 'General Aſſembly enjoins the ſynods at their ſeveral meet'ings, to enquire at the preſbyteries within their bounds, 'what care they have taken to execute the ſaid act,' &c. And further, that the Lord's people, may have opportunity of frequent communicating, the General Aſſembly, by the 6th act, Aſſ. 1711. 'Do recommend to preſbyteries, to do what 'they can, to get it ſo ordered, that the ſacrament of the 'Lord's ſupper, may be adminiſtred in their bounds, through 'the ſeveral months of the year.' And this they enacted for redreſſing the practices, that are too common in moſt place of crowding the whole communions of the bounds, in

ſpace of a few ſabbaths, in the ſummer-ſeaſon; whereby miniſters, who are called to aſſiſt at theſe occaſions, are exceedingly hurried and ſtraitned; and ſerious exerciſed perſons are deprived of the benefit of that holy ordinance during the reſt of the year, which is certainly a very great loſs: and alſo many pariſhes, by this method, are allowed the ſacrament no oftner than once in two years: which practices are ſtill continued notwithſtanding of all the excellent acts to the contrary. However, I am glad to hear, that in ſome pariſhes, miniſters have begun to celebrate this ordinance twice in the year; I heartily wiſh this practice were general among us, and people had a lively appetite after this quickening feaſt.

I confeſs there is one thing among us, which is a great obſtruction to the frequent celebration of this ordinance, viz. The great number of miniſters and preachings now uſed on ſuch occaſions, which truly makes that ſolemn work a buſineſs of ſuch outward toil and labour to the adminiſtrators, as diſcourages them frequently to undertake it. So that till ſome regulation be made in the foreſaid reſpect, I deſpair of ſeeing this holy ordinance diſpenſed ſo frequently among us as it ought to be.

In the days of old, there was leſs preaching at communions, but much power and life in them; but in our days, there is much preaching, but little power. Not that I am againſt much preaching at theſe occaſions, where there is an appetite among the hearers, and where plenty of miniſters may be had, without laying the neighbouring congregations deſolate, or proving any let to the frequency of this ordinance; but to make it a ſtanding order, that there ſhall be ſo many preachings, whether there be an appetite or no, or whatever inconveniences ſhould follow, I apprehend cannot be ſo eaſily juſtified. I acknowledge about the time of our late happy Revolution, when ſo much preaching at communions began to be a ſettled practice, there were ſuch vehement deſires among the people, after the ordinances, and lively preaching of the word, that had been ſo ſcarce for ſo many years before, that it was neceſſary to gratify them with much preaching at theſe ſolemn occaſions; but it is not to be expected, that theſe longings ſhould always continue. In the primitive times of Chriſtianity, when the diſciples hearts flamed with love to their lately crucified and aſcended Redeemer, they had ſo burning deſires after the ordinances and preaching of the

goſpel, that the apoſtle Paul, at the celebration of the Lord's ſupper, Acts xx. 7. was encouraged to continue preaching to the people till midnight; yet none ever pleaded, that the apoſtle's practice, on that occaſion, ſhould be a ſtanding rule for the church, in all time coming.

But that I be not too tedious in this preface, I ſhall only acquaint my reader, that I have choſen to handle this excellent ſubject in a catechiſtical method, as being the moſt eaſy and familiar way of inſtructing the ignorant, and moſt eaſy for the memory to retain. The work of catechiſing hath been ſignally bleſs'd of God, for inſtructing people in the principles of Chriſtianity; and where this is neglected or contemned, people underſtand little of the moſt excellent ſermons they hear, and are little edified by them. Proper food muſt be provided for children, as well as meat for ſtrong men. And hence it is, that the chief Shepherd enjoins his ſervants, to feed his lambs, as well as his ſheep.

I know the church of Scotland is already provided with excellent Catechiſms, both Shorter and Larger, and with a choice explanation of the Shorter by Mr. Vincent, all which I earneſtly recommend to the reader's diligent peruſal, and eſpecially our Larger Catechiſm, as containing a noble ſyſtem of divinity. It would be the advantage of all the members of this church, to be at more pains in reading, conſidering and laying it up in their memories, than generally they are. The approbation of the Larger Catechiſm, by the General Aſſembly 1648. Seſſ. 10. ſhould not be forgotten; in which we find, that after the moſt exact trial and examination, both by the reſpective preſbyteries of this church, and by the aſſembly itſelf, they do declare this Catechiſm to be moſt agreeable to the word of God, and the received doctrine of this church; and that it is a rich treaſure, for increaſing knowledge among the people of God; where alſo they bleſs God that ſo excellent a Catechiſm is prepared, with whom I do heartily join iſſue But ſeeing it cannot be expected that any Catechiſm of its bulk (which is of an univerſal nature, treating on all the heads of divinity) ſhould be ſo full and copious about the ſacraments, and particularly the *Lord's Supper*, as the neceſſity of ſome do require, I have adventured to compoſe this ſacramental Catechiſm, for the benefit of young communicants, and others weak in knowledge; and have ſtudied to contract as much of the doctrine of the Covenants, and of

the ſacraments, as poſſibly I could, into ſo ſmall bounds. And in doing this, I frankly acknowledge, I have borrowed many things from others that have written upon the ſubject, and eſpecially from our excellent Larger Catechiſm.

And in the whole compoſure, I have copied, as cloſely as I could, after the approven form of ſound words, expreſſed in the word of God, and agreeably thereto, in the Confeſſions of Faith, Larger and Shorter Catechiſms of this church, which are juſtly to be accounted moſt valuable pieces of our reformation.

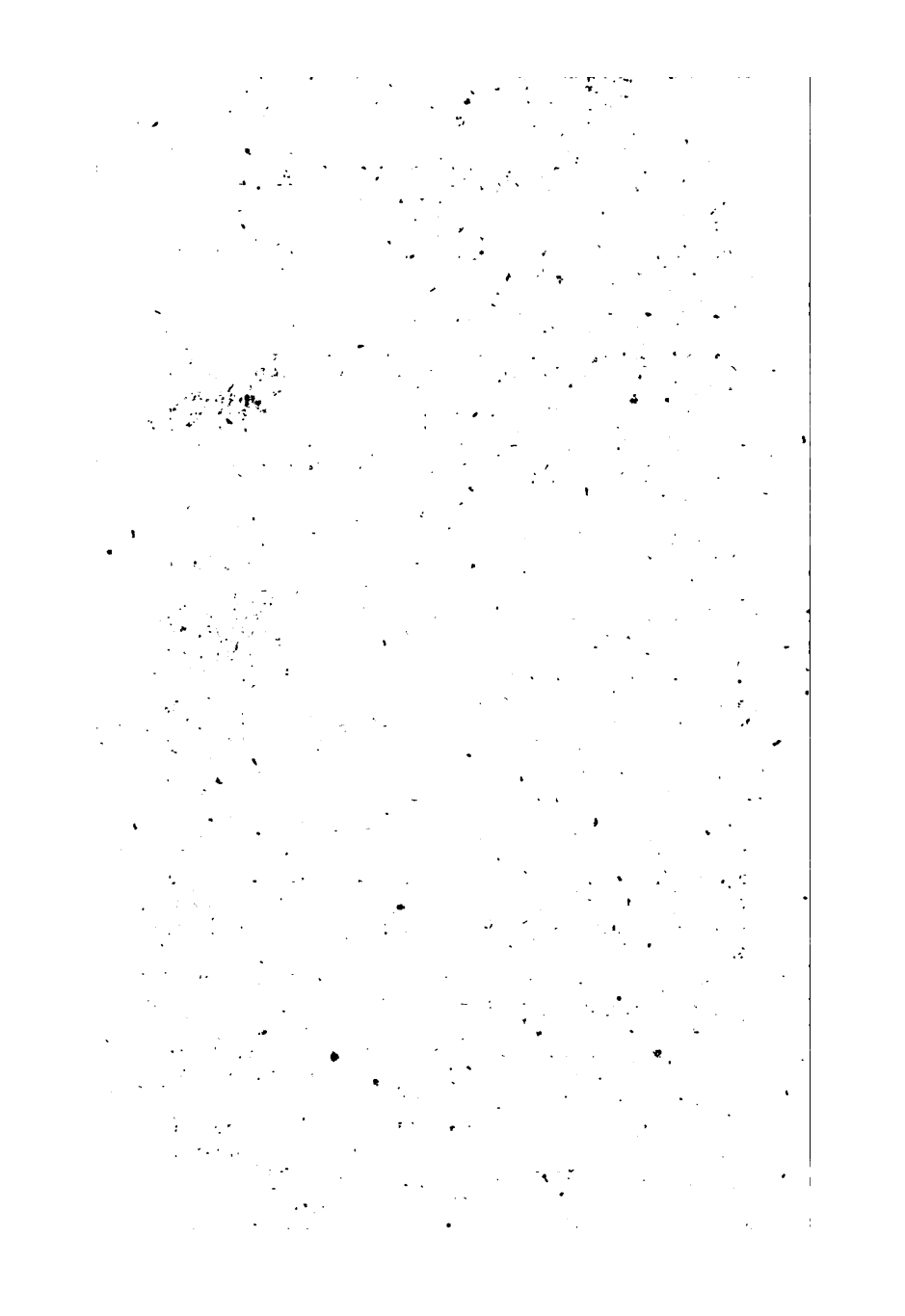
And truly I eſteem it a ſingular mercy to this church, in theſe ſhaking and fluctuating times, when new thoughts and expreſſions in matters of faith are vented, which are not agreeable to the form of ſound words formerly uſed in this church, that we have ſuch an approven ſtandard of doctrine to look to, as is laid down in our excellent Confeſſion of Faith and Catechiſms, plainly founded on the ſcriptures of truth, and which all the members of this church are ſtrictly bound to maintain, both by ſolemn national vows, and private engagements at baptiſm; not to mention the particular obligations which all the office-bearers of the church come under both by word and writ thereunto, at their reſpective ordinations and admiſſions to their functions. Only, I pray the Lord may give us grace, conſtantly to maintain and keep up the due and ſuitable impreſſions of theſe engagements on our ſpirits; which if we have, there is no doubt, but we will carefully evite every appearance of error; nay, even be afraid to diſuſe the former modes of ſpeaking and expreſſing goſpel truths uſed in the church, or adopt new phraſes and expreſſions in their ſtead; ſeeing ſuch a practice hath often introduced new errors into the church. It cannot but be thought ſtrange, that any lovers of our Zion, for the ſake of ſome fond new thoughts and peculiar expreſſions, (which perhaps their hearers cannot comprehend ſo well as themſelves, but are apt rather to conſtruct to a wrong ſenſe,) ſhould chooſe to recede from the old approven ways of ſpeaking, or find fault with thoſe that retain them, whereby their people are brought to ſtumble at worthy goſpel miniſters that have not learned their new phraſes, and paſs harſh cenſures on them; which not only tends to mar people's edification, but alſo to endanger the peace of our mother-church, and the purity of her doctrine. For by ſuch courſes, the ſeeds may be ſown, that

may ſpring up (if God prevent it not) into the noxious weeds of ſchiſm or error, when we of this generation are rotting in the duſt. I cannot yet be perſuaded, but Rutherford, Gilleſpie, Dickſon, Durham, Gutherie, and other ſuch eminent lights in this church, (that were bleſſed with ſuch large meaſures of the Spirit of God,) had as clear diſcoveries of the goſpel myſteries, and doctrine of grace; were as ſpiritual and evangelical in their preaching, frame and converſation; and alſo honoured by their maſter, to bring in as many ſouls to him, as any in our day; notwithſtanding that they taught, 'The covenant of grace, its being mutual, faith being its 'condition, the neceſſity of perſonally covenanting with 'God, of leaving ſin in order to come to Chriſt, of cloſing 'with him, upon the terms of the goſpel, of obeying goſpel 'precepts, making vows at the ſacrament, &c.' Though perhaps in ſome places, thoſe who would adventure to ſpeak in the ſtyle of the foreſaid worthies, may lay their account with being cenſured as legal preachers.

I pray the Lord may give us one heart and one way, that we may all think and ſpeak the ſame things; and that he may always preſerve this church from the infection of error of one ſort or another, whether Arminian or Antinomian; and that no opinion or expreſſion be vented among us, that either tends to the diſparagement of free grace, by aſcribing too much to the power of corrupt nature in the buſineſs of man's ſalvation; or, that under the pretext of advancing free grace, doth weaken people's obligation to holy duties.

But, reader, I ſhall not any longer detain thee from peruſing this Catechiſm; if thou findeſt in it any thing profitable or edifying to thy ſoul, then give God all the glory; and if any thing in it ſhew the author's weakneſs, I beg you may not raſhly cenſure, but pray for him who would willingly contribute his mite, for the advantage of the weak and ignorant.

DUNDEE, January, 1729.



A SACRAMENTAL CATECHISM: OR, A FAMILIAR INSTRUCTOR FOR YOUNG COMMUNICANTS.

QUESTION.

FOR what end hath the Lord appointed ſacraments in his Church?

Anſwer. To be viſible ſigns and ſeals of his gracious covenant with man, in order to repreſent and apply Chriſt and his benefits to his covenanted people; to ſtrengthen their faith in his promiſes, and ſolemnly to engage them to his ſervice.

Q. Why hath the infinitely glorious God choſen to carry on the buſineſs of man's ſalvation, in the way and method of a covenant, or gracious paction with him?

A. For theſe reaſons, 1. To diſplay the mildneſs of his nature, and moderation of his government; for though he be the abſolute emperor of the world; and may make of his creatures what he pleaſes; yet he ſweetly tempers his ſupremacy with goodneſs, ſeeking (as it were) to reign with his ſubjects conſent.

2dly, To ſhew his marvellous goodneſs, and condeſcenſion to the ſons of men; in that he humbleth himſelf to treat familiarly with them, make promiſes, and come under obligations to make them happy and glorious. 'Lord, what 'is man that thou art mindful of him, and the ſon of man 'that thou thus viſiteſt him!'

3dly, God deals thus with men, that he might have reaſonable ſervice from a willing people, and their voluntary conſent to his good laws. For though he might preſcribe to

man, what conditions of happineſs he pleaſed; yet he would require nothing of him but what he ſhould be obliged to judge a juſt and eaſy yoke.

4*thly*, That his people might ſerve and obey him, with the greater delight, having ſuch gracious covenant promiſes for their encouragement.

Q. *How many covenants hath God made with man, concerning life and ſalvation?*

A. Two, the *firſt*, being called the *covenant of works*; the *ſecond*, the *covenant of grace*.

Q. *What is the covenant of works?*

A. It is a gracious agreement, which the great Creator made with our firſt parents, Adam and Eve, in their ſtate of innocence: and in them, with all their children deſcending from them by ordinary generation: wherein God promiſed them life and happineſs, upon their perfect obedience to his holy will and law; and threatened them with death and miſery in caſe of diſobedience. And withal, giving them for the trial of their obedience, a particular command, that they ſhould not eat of the 'tree of the knowledge of good and 'evil, Gen. ii. 17. Gal. iii. 10, 12.

Q. *How doth it appear that God made ſuch a covenant with our firſt parents?*

A. Becauſe in this affair, the ſcripture lays down the eſſential parts of a covenant: we have two diſtinct parties contracting, God on the one part, and man on the other. We have God requiring ſomething of man, viz. obedience to his will: and we have this requiſition, attended with a promiſe of life upon obedience; and a threatening of death upon not obedience. And *laſtly*, We have Adam ſubmitting or conſenting to all this: for ſeeing he was made after the image of God, perfectly holy; he behoved certainly to conſent to God's holy will, when at firſt laid before him, and that immediately by God himſelf, his gracious and bountiful Creator. And this alſo is confirmed by ſeveral places of ſcripture, Hoſ. vi. 7. Rom. iii. 27. Rom. vi. 14. Gal. iv. 24.

Q. *Why is this covenant by the compilers of our Confeſſion of Faith, called ſometimes a covenant of works, and ſometimes a covenant of life?*

A Becauſe works or perfect obedience, was the condition his covenant, on man's part; and life or perfect happineſs the reward promiſed on God's part,

Q. *Was there no grace manifested in the first covenant?*

A. Yes, in several things, 1. In that the glorious Creator was pleased to descend (as it were) to a level, and transact a covenant with his own creature, and thereby come under bonds and obligations to him, Psal. cxiii. 5, 6. Rom. xi. 35.

2*dly*, In taking such pains to help the mutability of man's state and free-will, by hedging in his way with promises and threatenings; and thereby graciously fortifying and arming him, against all temptations to sin, by furnishing him with arguments, both from the promise of reward in case of obedience, and the threatening of punishment in case of transgression.

3*dly*, In that he was pleased to promise a reward so great and glorious as eternal life, to man's obedience, when he was sufficiently obliged to it, by the law of his creation, though nothing had been promised for it.

4*thly*, In that he created Adam with sufficiency of power and grace to enable him to perform God's whole will; gave him all the creatures to obey him, and allowed him intimate communion with himself.

Q. *What law or rule had our first parents given them for their obedience, in the estate of innocency?*

A. They had both the moral law, and a positive law; both a general commandment, 'do this and live;' and a special commandment 'not to eat of the tree of knowledge.'

Q. *How were these laws given and promulgate to our first parents?*

A. By their creation in a perfect state, they had the moral law written and engraven in their hearts. But the positive law was given them by external revelation, Eccl. vii. 29. Rom. ii. 14, 15. Gen. ii. 17.

Q. *Why is that special command called a positive law, and distinguished from the moral law?*

A. In regard it is of the nature of a positive law, to command or prohibit things that before were indifferent, and only become good or evil by virtue of the command, and not of their own nature. So the eating of the tree of knowledge was neither good nor evil, but as commanded or forbidden by God. That law was not founded on the light or dictates of nature, as all the moral precepts are; which, therefore, are a standing and unalterable rule of righteousness.

Q. *Why did God forbid the eating of that tree?*

A. 1. To let Adam know that he was not abſolute owner of what he poſſeſſed, but only a ſervant; and that God was the ſupreme Maſter and Lord of all.

2*dly*, To keep him in mind, that his happineſs did not lye in time's things, but in the pleaſing of God, and enjoying his favour.

3*dly*, To try his obedience, and regard to the divine authority; and to render him for ever inexcuſable, if he ſhould diſobey God in ſo eaſy a command, when he had ſuch helps and encouragements to keep it.

Q. *Did our firſt parents keep their covenant with God?*

A. No; for though they had ſufficient ſtrength given them for keeping it perfectly; yet being left to the freedom of their own will, they did ſo miſmanage the ſame, that they miſbelieved God, hearkened to the devil, and complied with his temptation to eat the forbidden fruit: whereby they ſinned againſt the cleareſt light, and were guilty of the moſt curſed ingratitude and rebellion againſt God.

Q. *What ſtate did the breach of the covenant of works bring man into?*

A. Into a moſt wretched and miſerable condition, having thereby loſt God's image; his favour and all communion with him; plunged himſelf into a fearful gulph of ſin; and fallen under the ſentence of death and all ſorts of miſeries, temporal, ſpiritual and eternal.

Q. *Was the whole poſterity of Adam brought into this woful ſtate by Adam's ſin?*

A. Yes, all of them who deſcended from him by ordinary generation: ſo that never any, but the man Chriſt was excepted.

Q. *How can we be charged with Adam's guilt, ſeeing we were not exiſtent when he ſinned?*

A. Becauſe when the covenant was made with Adam, he acted as a public perſon, repreſenting his whole poſterity who were then in his loins; and thus the covenant being made with them in him, they ſinned in him, and fell with him, Rom. v. 12, 18, 19. 1 Cor. xv. 21, 22.

Q. *Was there no remedy provided for Adam in the firſt covenant in caſe of a breach?*

A. No; for it threatened death for the leaſt tranſgreſſion, and left the tranſgreſſor hopeleſs under the curſe, without a promiſe of pardon upon repentance, or of new ſtrength upon

loſing what he had, or of a ſurety to anſwer for him, Gen. ii. 17. Gal. iii. 10.

Q. *Was it poſſible for fallen man to find out a remedy for himſelf?*

A. No; for he loſt all power to do any thing that was good; and his miſery called for a ranſom of infinite value, which none but God could provide, Rom. vii. 18. Pſal. xlix. 7, 8. Mic. vi. 6, 7. Hoſ. xiii. 9.

Q. *Is the covenant of works now diſanulled, ſo as it hath no power over any man?*

A. No; for every natural man and unbeliever, is as much under the power and obligation of this covenant, as ever Adam was; it ſtill ſtands in full force againſt all ſuch; they are obliged to perform its condition, viz. perfect obedience, and alſo to undergo the penalty for breaking it, for they lye ſtill under its ſentence, according to John iii. 18. 'He that believeth 'not is condemned already,' i. e. by virtue of the covenant of works, which they have violated, and Eph. ii. 3. it is ſaid, 'We are all by nature children of wrath,' i. e. we are doomed to wrath and deſtruction by the broken covenant of works, and ſtill lye under the ſentence, while we are in a ſtate of nature.

Q. *Is any man now able to anſwer the demands of the covenant of works?*

A. No; for, as we have loſt our ſtrength to perform its condition, ſo it is impoſſible for any created power to pay its penalty, or give ſatisfaction to infinite juſtice for the offence of ſin.

Q. *But how is it conſiſtent with juſtice to require that from us, which we are utterly unable to perform?*

A. Though we by our own fault have loſt our ſtrength to obey, yet God doth not thereby loſe his juſt right to demand what belongs to him. A creditor loſeth not his right to crave a juſt debt, becauſe the debtor has ſquandered away his ſtock, and is turned bankrupt; nay he is ſtill liable and his children too. So in this caſe being unable to pay, will not abſolve us from our debt; eſpecially ſeeing the inability is brought on by ourſelves.

Q. *Is there any way for ſuch bankrupts as we are, to be diſcharged of that debt, and looſed from the bond of the firſt covenant?*

A. There is no way, but by taking hold of the new co

nant, and flying to its Mediator and Surety for the payment of our debt.

Q. *Are believers in Christ wholly absolved from the obligation of the covenant of works?*

A. They are wholly loosed from this covenant, as to its power of justification and condemnation. It can neither justify nor condemn them, since God hath entered into a new covenant with them for their justification. But tho' it be no ways binding upon believers, as a covenant; yet still it binds them as a law, or rule for regulating their hearts and lives: for the law being of universal moral equity, it remains a perpetual rule of righteousness to believers as well others: and it is impossible that a rational creature can at any time be loosed from its obligation as a holy and just law; though believers are freed from its condemnation as a covenant. As the law or covenant of works is (in respect of its threats and whips) a schoolmaster to drive us unto Christ for righteousness and justification; so Christ graciously frees his people from the rigour and condemning power of this school-master; but refers them back to him as a guide and director of their walk and behaviour, Gal. iii. 13, 24. 1 Cor. ix. 21. Rom. vi. 14. Rom. vii. 16, 22, 25.

Q. *Is it simply impossible for any man now to enter heaven by the way of a covenant of works?*

A. Yes, certainly; for that way was eternally blocked up by Adam's fall; so that there is no passage by it ever since, Rom. iii 20. Rom. viii. 3. Gal. ii. 21.

Q. *If there be no salvation by that Covenant, why doth the Lord now require sinners to perform the condition of it, viz. perfect obedience, as he did the Israelites of old, and that young man,* Matth. xix. 17. If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments?

A. The Lord insists on the terms of the first covenant with all sinners in a natural state, not to shew that life is attainable that way, but for these reasons.

1. To shew the equity of the terms of the first covenant, the justice of its sentence, and his right to demand obedience and satisfaction thereto.

2*dly*, To humble proud self-conceited sinners under a sense guilt, and convince them of their own impotency.

3*dly*, To drive them out of themselves, and make them de-

ſpair of ſalvation by their own righteouſneſs, and of finding life by the firſt covenant, Rom vii. 9.

4thly, To convince them of the abſolute neceſſity of betaking themſelves to the covenant of grace, and the righteouſneſs of the Mediator therein provided, Gal. iii 22, 24.

Q. *Why have men ſuch a natural inclination to be juſtified and ſaved by the way of the old covenant of works?*

A. It being the covenant of nature, and made with Adam when all mankind was in his loins; men, by nature do ſtill entertain a deep impreſſion of it. Beſides, man, by nature being a proud and ſelfiſh creature, he is unwilling to be beholden to another for righteouſneſs and ſalvation, but ſtrongly inclineth to be his own ſaviour and to ſtand upon his own legs, and this we all derive by natural generation from Adam. Hence it was that the Jews and Phariſees of old ſought ſo earneſtly to 'eſtabliſh their own righteouſneſs,' and declined 'to ſubmit to the righteouſneſs of Chriſt,' Matth. xix. 16. Luke xviii. 11. Rom. x. 3. Hence alſo the Galatians of old ſought to join their own works, with Chriſt's righteouſneſs (as the Papiſts do now) in the matter of juſtification. We are all naturally married unto the law, or a covenant of works, that is our firſt huſband; and from it we muſt neceſſarily be divorced, in order to our being married to Chriſt and his righteouſneſs in a covenant of grace. But ſo ſtrong and rooted is our inclination to our firſt huſband, the covenant of works, that even the beſt believers have a natural hankering after it, and find it the greateſt difficulty in the world to get their hearts weaned and pluckt from ſelf-righteouſneſs; and from ſeeking to be juſtified and accepted with God, by virtue of ſomething in themſelves.

Q. *Did God leave all mankind to periſh under the ſentence and penalty of the broken covenant of works?*

A. No; for God of his own free grace from all eternity, hath elected ſome to be redeemed and ſaved from it, Eph. i. 4, 5.

Q. *What way hath God choſen to redeem and ſave elect ſinners from their loſt and periſhing eſtate?*

A. Man being wholly miſerable, and incapable of any relief by the firſt covenant; God of his infinite mercy was pleaſed to frame a gracious new covenant anſwering all the demands of our miſerable circumſtances, and conſtitute his own Son to be the Mediator and ſurety of it; and this is now the

only way and method of salvation, Gen. iii. 15. Gen. xvii. 2, 7. Rom. viii. 3. Acts iv. 12.

Q. *What is this gracious new covenant, which God hath made for redeeming fallen man?*

A. It may be said to be twofold. 1. The covenant made from eternity with Christ in name of the elect, commonly called the Covenant of Redemption.

2*dly*, The covenant of reconciliation made in time with the elect in Christ, commonly called the Covenant of Grace.

Q. *Doth the word of God give any ground for this distinction?*

A. Yes, Psal. lxxxix. 3. &c. Isa. lix. 21.

Q. *What is the covenant of redemption?*

A. It is an eternal and gracious agreement in the council of the glorious Trinity, upon the foresight of man's fall, for the redemption and recovery of elect sinners: wherein God the Father, out of his infinite mercy, gave a certain number of fallen mankind to God the Son, as their federal representative and surety, to be by him redeemed and saved: and for this end, demanding of him, that he should assume their nature, and in their room satisfy divine justice, by paying their whole debt both of obedience and suffering, the which they were obliged to do by the covenant of works: and also, that he should undertake to gather all the lost elect and bring them unto God. And for his encouragement in this great work, it was promised to the Son, that he should have all requisite furniture, support, acceptance, and success: And likewise a glorious reward to himself, together with grace and glory to his people. With which proposals of the Father, the Son out of his infinite free love did most chearfully comply; undertook to do the whole work required of him, accepting of, and claiming the promises made unto him, Psal. lxxxix. 3, 4, 19, 20, &c. Isa. xlix. 3, 4, &c. Isa. lix. 20, 21. 2 Tim. i. 9. Tit. i. 2. Heb. x. 5, 9. Psal. ii. 7, 8. Isa. l. 5, 6, 7. Psal. xl. 7, 8. John x. 18. John xvii. 4, 5.

Q. *What is the covenant of grace?*

A. It is God's free and gracious paction with elect sinners in Christ, proposed to and made with them in the gospel; wherein, according to his eternal compact with Christ their surety, and for the sake of his mediation and merits, he graciously and immutably promiseth pardon, peace, grace and glory to them. Particularly, he promises in an absolute man-

ner, to grant them the bleſſings of vocation, faith, regeneration and other means of ſalvation. And in order to their obtaining of the pardon of ſin, the adoption of children, and eternal life (all which bleſſings are purchaſed by Chriſt) he requires of them, that they believe 'in his Son the Lord 'Jeſus Chriſt,' and accept of him, with all the benefits of this covenant by a true and lively faith, which they are called to ſhew forth by a ſincere repentance, and ſtudy of new obedience. All which gracious promiſes and demands, the elect in due time, upon God's call, do cordially acquieſce in, accept of, and give conſent unto: and this they do, thro' the grace and ſtrength of Chriſt their ſurety, according to his eternal engagement for them, Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27. Heb. viii. 10. John i. 12. John iii. 16. Jam. ii. 18, 22. John vi. 37, 44, 45. John xvii. 12. Acts v. 31.

Q. Was not this new covenant a moſt wonderful, gracious, and ſuitable contrivance and remedy for our miſery in a fallen ſtate?

A. Yes; for though the firſt was a glorious covenant contrived in infinite wiſdom; yet ſeeing it could not anſwer the demands of theſe miſerable circumſtances we plunged ourſelves into, God was content to lay it aſide, and frame a new one ſuitable to our miſery. For the firſt covenant leaving man helpleſs, hopeleſs, and remedileſs under its ſentence, having no proviſion for pardon, place for repentance, nor room for a Mediator, God pitied us in our undone ſtate, (though he could more eaſily have deſtroyed Adam and his poſterity, and made a new world of innocent creatures to have been governed by the firſt covenant) yea, he took down that glorious fabric of obedience and rewards, and framed a more gracious and excellent one in its ſtead, for ſaving loſt man. And ſeeing man was diſabled and incapacitate for covenanting with God by himſelf a ſecond time, God found out a Mediator and ſurety to bind for him, and perform both the condition and pay the penalty of the firſt covenant, and anſwer for any new thing to be demanded of him. And thus both God's juſtice is ſatisfied and man's happineſs ſecured, the law-breaker's life ſaved, and the law-maker's honour maintained; and free-grace highly glorified.

Q. *Is there not a great affinity betwixt the covenant of redemption, and the covenant of grace?*

A. Yes; for they agree not only in their ſpring, ends, an-

indiſſolvable nature, but likewiſe in their ſubſtance and matter; in ſo far as the covenant of redemption doth comprehend the whole of the covenant of grace, both promiſes and demands: for the whole bleſſings and benefits promiſed in the covenant of grace to the elect, were from eternity promiſed in the covenant of redemption to Chriſt their head and repreſentative; and ſo to the elect in him: and for the condition or qualifications required of the elect in the covenant of grace, they were firſt demanded of Chriſt their head in the covenant of redemption, who there undertook and became ſurety for his people's performance. So that we ſee in ſome reſpect, the covenant of grace is only a tranſcript of the covenant of redemption, according to 2 Tim. i. 9. Tit. i. 2. Gal. iii. 16.

Q. *Wherein then doth theſe two covenants differ?*

A. In theſe reſpects, 1. As to the time of making them; the covenant of redemption being made from all eternity; but the covenant of grace only in time by the preaching of the goſpel.

2dly, The federates or parties covenanting are different: in the Covenant of Redemption, the Father and the Son are the only parties covenanting; but in the Covenant of Grace, God and the elect are the parties. I grant, that Chriſt is a federate in the covenant of Grace, as well as in that of Redemption, but in different reſpects: for in the firſt he ſtood as principal, but in the ſecond as ſurety. In the firſt he was the only party; but in the ſecond he hath the elect joined with him. Chriſt is the Mediator and ſurety of the Covenant of Grace, but the Covenant of Redemption had no Mediator or ſurety; the Father and the Son truſted one another upon the agreement.

3dly, Theſe two covenants differ from one another as a prior treaty or agreement, made by one friend for the behoof of another, doth differ from the poſterior ratification of it by the party concerned, for whoſe good it was made. Our bleſſed Redeemer Chriſt graciouſly ſiſted himſelf as the elect's repreſentative in the Covenant of Redemption, tranſacted with God the creditor for the payment of their debt, and made a moſt advantageous bargain for them. But it being made without the elect's knowledge, it was neceſſary that their conſent ſhould be had to this treaty and method of ſalvation; wherefore God is pleaſed to cauſe it to be promulgated and propoſed to them in the goſpel, for the gaining of their con-

ſent. And God's voice to them in the goſpel is to this effect; "Are you content with what Chriſt my Son hath engaged "and done in your name? Are you willing to quit all other "methods of ſalvation, and come to me thro' a Mediator, "and rely wholly upon his righteouſneſs? Are you ſatisfied "with the remedy provided for you in the Covenant of Redemption." O, ſaith the poor ſoul, (being determined thereto by the powerful operation of the Holy Ghoſt, whoſe office it is, according to the foreſaid eternal agreement to apply the remedy prepared by Chriſt) "This is a moſt noble "method of ſalvation, I am well pleaſed with the eternal "treaty and execution of it, with the Mediator and his "righteouſneſs, and with the great and precious promiſes "made to me in him: I renounce all other ways of ſalva-"tion, and rely entirely on Chriſt, to bring me to God." And this is that which we call the Covenant of Grace.

4thly, They differ in reſpect of their comprehenſiveneſs, the Covenant of Redemption being far more large and comprehenſive than the Covenant of Grace, in regard it doth contain it and much more: for the Covenant of Redemption hath in it, not only what is promiſed to, and required of the elect, but alſo many diſtinct demands of Chriſt as their ſurety, and promiſes made to him as ſuch, which do not immediately concern the elect; ſuch as theſe, it was required of Chriſt that he ſhould "leave his glory, take a body of fleſh, fulfil the "law, and ſuffer death: alſo, that he ſhould quicken the "elect by his Spirit, convert, and ſanctify them, guide them "through the world, and bring them ſafe to glory at laſt." Again, it was promiſed to Chriſt perſonally, for his encouragement to engage in this work, that he ſhould have all "needful aſſiſtance and furniture for it, acceptance and ſuc-"ceſs in it, and a glorious perſonal reward, an honourable "reſurrection, and high exaltation above all principalities "and powers. That he ſhould have the adminiſtration of "all things put in his hands, for the good of his people, and "an unſearchable treaſure of grace and rich ſupplies given "him, to communicate to them, whatever is for their good "and happineſs." Whereupon Chriſt as our ſurety freely undertook the work propoſed, and laid hold on the promiſes, both theſe made to him perſonally, and theſe made to his ſeed in him, Gal. iii. 16. 2 Tim. i. 9.

Thus we ſee how many things there are in the Covenant

of Redemption, required of, and promiſed to Chriſt as the elect's ſurety and repreſentative, diſtinct from the things promiſed to and required of the elect themſelves: which laſt part makes up the Covenant of grace when promulgate to them in the goſpel, for their conſent and acceptance; ſo that it is plainly a part or branch of the Covenant of Redemption, and differs nothing from it, but as a part doth from the whole, or as the map of a particular province diſtinctly bounded and illuminated with a new inſcription or dedication, differs from a general map of the whole kingdom whereof it is a part. The Covenant of grace as propoſed to and made with Chriſt in the elect's name from eternity, can hardly be diſtinguiſhed from the Covenant of Redemption; for thus it is a conſtituent part thereof, and incorporated with it. But as it is drawn out by itſelf, to be propoſed to the elect in the goſpel and their conſent obtained to it, it becomes a diſtinct covenant. Nay, it is diſtinct both in reſpect of conditions and promiſes.

1. In reſpect of conditions: death, and ſatisfaction for ſin thereby, was the great condition of the Covenant of Redemption on Chriſt's part; but faith, and cloſing with Chriſt thereby, is the condition of the Covenant of Grace on the elect's part. I grant, indeed, that Chriſt our Mediator is bound for the performance of both theſe conditions, but it is in different reſpects: for the firſt he is engaged as principal, but for the ſecond as ſurety. Chriſt undertook for us, things of two ſorts; firſt, Things that he was to do for us by himſelf; ſecondly, Things that he was to make and enable us to do: the firſt ſort he performed for us, according to the Covenant of Redemption, as the principal party engaged for them. The ſecond, he works in us as the ſurety of the Covenant of Grace, which from eternity he undertook to be. Now there is a great difference betwixt theſe two; for tho' it be certain and true in the ſtricteſt ſenſe, that Chriſt actually died for us, and ſatisfied juſtice for us, and in our room; yet it can noways be ſaid that he repents or believes for us, theſe are formally our acts, though it be Chriſt that enables us to do them, and works them in us.

2. In reſpect of promiſes; the great promiſe on God's part to Chriſt in the covenant of Redemption was giving to him a ſeed and a glorious reward: but his great promiſe to the elect in the Covenant of Grace, is the giving of redemption and eternal life to the party believing. The tenor of

the Covenant of Redemption as made with Chriſt from eternity runs thus; "Make thy ſoul an offering for ſin, and "thou ſhalt ſee thy ſeed;" But the tenor of the Covenant of grace as propoſed to the elect in the goſpel, is, "Believe "in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and thou ſhalt not periſh in thy "ſins, but have everlaſting life," Iſa. liii. 10. John iii. 16.

Q. *Wherein doth the Covenant of grace differ from the Covenant of Works?*

A. In many things, ſuch as; 1. The Covenant of Works which God entered into with our firſt parents, was a covenant of friendſhip, betwixt God and an innocent creature, that were in amity together. But the Covenant of Grace is a covenant of reconciliation betwixt enemies, an offended God and guilty man: The firſt flowed from divine love and goodneſs; but the ſecond from divine compaſſion and tender mercies.

2. The firſt covenant was univerſal, being made with all mankind in Adam. But the ſecond in particular, being only made with the elect in Chriſt.

3. The condition required of Adam in the firſt Covenant, was working and obeying, and that to perfection; but that required of us in the ſecond, is believing.

4. The firſt covenant makes the proper condition of life, and the ground of a man's juſtification before God, to be the righteouſneſs performed by the man himſelf: but the ſecond, declares it to be, the righteouſneſs performed by our ſurety Chriſt, apprehended by our faith.

5. The firſt covenant did not provide, nor ſo much as admit of a Mediator or ſurety to anſwer for Adam's performing his part of it, or of any remedy in caſe of breaking it: for it allowed no place for repentance, it gave no hopes of forgiveneſs upon any condition whatſoever. But the ſecond covenant doth graciouſly admit and allow of all theſe.

6. The firſt covenant could be broken and diſannulled, but the ſecond is indiſſolvable and everlaſting, becauſe of the ſufficiency and faithfulneſs of its ſurety, Iſa. liv. 10. Iſa. lv. 3. Heb. vii. 22, 24, 25.

7. The leaſt ſin or failing on Adam's part, made void the firſt covenant, excluded him from all the bleſſings promiſed in it, and rendered him perfectly miſerable: but all the ſins and failings of the elect cannot diſſolve the ſecond, or deprive them of happineſs, Pſal. lxxxix. 31, 33, 34. Jer. xxxi. 14. Heb. xiii. 5, 8. 1 John ii. 1, 2.

Q. *Hath our faith the ſame place in the Covenant of Grace, that Adam's obedience had in the Covenant of Works? Or, is faith the condition of the Covenant of Grace, in the ſame ſenſe, that Adam's obedience was in the condition of the Covenant of Works?*

A. No; for Adam's obedience was his righteouſneſs before God, and the proper ground of his juſtification and claim to happineſs: It was a real and pleadable condition according to the covenant, upon which Adam's title to life and happineſs was properly founded. But this cannot be ſaid of the believer's faith; for faith is not his righteouſneſs before God, nor the ground of his juſtification and claim to happineſs; it being only the inſtrument or applying condition required of him, for intereſting him in the righteouſneſs of Chriſt his ſurety; which alone is the proper ground of his juſtification and claim to happineſs; and the only pleadable and meritorious condition of life and ſalvation, which the poor, naked, and guilty ſoul muſt flee to, and depend upon.

2. The condition required of Adam in the firſt covenant was to be performed by him in his own ſtrength, i. e. the ſtrength that was given him at his creation. But the condition required in the ſecond covenant, is not to be performed by the elect ſinner in his own natural ſtrength, but by the ſtrength freely promiſed and communicated to him in this covenant.

Q. *Doth not the Covenant of Grace oblige us to obedience, as well as the Covenant of Works did?*

A. Yes, but not in the ſame way, or for the ſame ends.

Q. *What is the difference betwixt legal and evangelical obedience?*

A. It is very great in ſeveral reſpects. 1. Legal obedience was peremptorily commanded as man's duty: but evangelical obedience is alſo freely promiſed, and given as the gift of God.

2. The firſt could not be admitted, unleſs abſolutely perfect; but the ſecond is accepted, tho' imperfect, if ſincere.

3. They vaſtly differ in their ends, the firſt was required as the proper condition of life and happineſs; but the ſecond, as an evidence of our faith, and conformity to our Redeemer. The firſt was for the juſtification of our perſons; but the ſecond for the teſtification of our gratitude for redeeming love. The firſt was required as the legal condition for purchaſing of

heaven and glory; but the ſecond, as a goſpel qualification in order to poſſeſſing it only.

Q. *What names or epithets doth the Covenant of Grace get in ſcripture?*

A. A great many, particularly it is called a teſtament, a covenant of peace, a covenant of life, a covenant of promiſe, a new covenant, an everlaſting holy, ſure, and well ordered covenant, Heb. ix. 15. Ezek. xxxvii. 26 Mal. ii. 5. Eph. ii. 12. Heb. xii. 24. Iſa. lv. 3. Luke i. 78. 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

Q. *Why is this covenant called a teſtament?*

A. It is frequently called ſo in ſcripture, and that becauſe the everlaſting inheritance promiſed in it, with all things thereunto belonging, is freely bequeathed and made over to the elect; yea, even the things required of them, are freely promiſed to them: and all theſe precious promiſes and legacies are made ſure and firm to them by the death of Jeſus Chriſt the teſtator, Heb. ix. 15, 16, 17. Matth. xxvi. 28.

Q. *Is the Covenant of Grace a ſcripture term, and what is the import and meaning of it?*

A. This term indeed is not found in the expreſs words, tho' it be oft expreſt in words equivalent. The term is very ſignificant and moſt fitly appropriated to this covenant; in regard the free grace (i. e. the undeſerved mercy and goodneſs) of God is richly and glorioufly diſplayed in this covenant. It was free grace that inclined God at firſt to contrive it, that moved him afterwards to reveal and propoſe it. It is free grace that determines the elect to conſent to it, and abide in it. And it is the exalting of God's free grace, which is the great end and deſign of it. But more eſpecially it is called a Covenant of Grace, in reſpect of the matter of it, all the bleſſings and good things promiſed in it, being God's gracious and free gifts to undeſerving ſinners, proceeding meerly from his gratuitous bounty, and aſtoniſhing free love in Chriſt. Yea, ſo full of grace is this covenant, tho' God is pleaſed to require faith of us, as the condition to intereſt us in the benefits of it, and alſo good works, to ſhew forth that faith: yet both that faith, and theſe works, are as freely promiſed and given to the elect by virtue of this covenant, as any other bleſſing in it, Eph. i. 4, 5, 6. Eph. ii. 8, 9, 10. Zec. iv. 7.

Q. *What are theſe bleſſings, gifts, and benefits, which are ſo freely offered and promiſed to us in this covenant?*

A. They are ſo many, they cannot be numbered; and ſi

great, they cannot be expreſt. The great thing ſtipulated on God's part in this covenant, and that which is the ſum and ſubſtance of all his other promiſes, is, *I will be your God*, Jer. xxxi. 33. This is the fulleſt, largeſt, ſweeteſt, ſublimeſt, and moſt comprehenſive promiſe in the whole Bible. The Covenant of Works had no ſuch promiſe that we read of; God ſaid only to Adam, *Do this and live*, i. e. thou ſhalt have life and happineſs. But in the Covenant of Grace he ſaith, *Believe in my Son, and I will be thy God*, i. e. I'll not only give you life, heaven, and glory, but I'll give you myſelf, a Jehovah, all I am, all I have, and all I can do, ſhall be thine. *I'll be thy God*, includes all God's bleſſings to his people, whether grace or glory, earth or heaven, time or eternity. It implies his ſtanding inſtead of all relations to them, his being their Father, their King, their Huſband, their Maſter, their Friend, their Benefactor, and all things to them. Further, *I'll be your God*, imports an intereſt in all the divine attributes and perfections, you ſhall have my wiſdom for your direction, my power for your protection, my mercy for your pardon, my grace for your ſanctification, my faithfulneſs for making good all the promiſes to you, and my ſufficiency for giving you perfect happineſs. Nay, a whole Trinity ſhall be yours, the Father with his eternal love and pity, the Son with all the fulneſs of his purchaſe, and the Holy Ghoſt to make application of the bleſſings of that purchaſe unto you.

Q. *What are the bleſſings of Chriſt's purchaſe contained in this covenant?*

A. All the bleſſings and mercies that ever were or ſhall be enjoyed by any believer in time or eternity, they are all the fruits of Chriſt's purchaſe, and run to them in the channel of this covenant. The chief of theſe particular bleſſings, are, "The new heart, illumination, faith, repentance, pardon, "freedom from the law's curſes, reconciliation, adoption, "ſanctification, acceſs to God, hearing of prayers, the quick-"nings, conſolations, and conduct of the Holy Spirit, increaſe "of grace, peace of conſcience, perſeverance, the miniſtry of "angels, ſuitable outward proviſion, through-bearing at death, "reſurrection to life, and eternal glory;" together with all the graces of the Spirit, and innumerable other bleſſings, temporal, ſpiritual, and eternal, Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26, 27. Heb. viii. 10, 11, 12. Pſalm xxxiii. 1, &c. Pſalm xxxiv. 10. Pſalm lxxxiv. 11. Pſalm xci. 11. Iſa. xxxiii. 16. Iſa. xli. 10.

Jer. iii. 19. Hoſ. xiv. 4, 5. John x. 28. 1 Cor. i. 30. 1 Cor. iii. 22, 2 Cor. i. 20. 2 Cor. vi. 18. Jer. xxxi. 33, 34. Jer. xxxii. 38, 39, 40, 41. Rom. viii. 26, 28. John iii. 18, 36. John xiv. 16, 17, 26. Iſa. liv. 13. Iſa. liii. 11. Rom. iii. 24, 25, 26. 1 Tim. iv. 8. Phil. iv. 19. 2 Pet. i. 4.

Q. *Whether is the Covenant of Grace abſolute or conditional?*

A. If the definition before given of this covenant, with the ſcripture texts, whereon it is founded, be duly conſidered and compared, we will find it partly abſolute, and partly conditional.

Q. *In what reſpect is the Covenant of Grace abſolute?*

A. In reſpect of the firſt bleſſings and benefits promiſed in it, which ſerve as means for obtaining the ends of the covenant, ſuch as effectual vocation, regeneration, faith, and repentance; theſe are promiſed, and given abſolutely and freely by God for Chriſt's ſake, without depending on any condition to be performed by the elect, Heb. viii. 10. John vi. 44, 45.

Q. *In what reſpect is this covenant conditional?*

A. In reſpect of the ſecond and ſubſequent bleſſings of it, which are as the end of the foreſaid means, ſuch as union with Chriſt, juſtification, adoption and glorification. God is pleaſed to ſuſpend the beſtowing of theſe, till that condition be performed by the elect, which he requires, viz. Faith, John i. 12. Gal. ii. 16. Phil. iii. 19.

Q. *In what ſenſe is faith called a condition, on our part, in this covenant?*

A. I ſhewed before that it is not to be meant in that ſenſe, that obedience is called the condition of the Covenant of Works; that we do not underſtand it as an act any ways meritorious, or pleadable before God for a reward, or an act performed by our own inherent ſtrength, or elicite by the power of our free will. But we mean only that faith is an act or qualification, required of us in point of duty, as neceſſarily antecedent to the conferring of the promiſed bleſſings of pardon and life: and that the beſtowing of theſe bleſſings is ſuſpended, till this act or condition be performed.

Q. *Is faith the only condition in the Covenant of Grace?*

A. In this covenant, there are conditions of three ſorts. 1. There is *conditio propter quam*, or a condition for which the bleſſings of this covenant are beſtowed on the elect, and the

is Chriſt's ſatisfaction and merits, in reſpect whereof, all the bleſſings of the covenant are truly conditional, except that of election, and God's purpoſe of redemption.

2. There is *conditio per quam*, or a condition by which we come to get an actual title to and intereſt in the ſecond, or ſubſequent bleſſings of the covenant before-mentioned, and that is faith, which is required as a neceſſary condition, inſtrument, or mean of application on one part, in order to our partaking of theſe bleſſings, Rom. v. 1. Acts xvi. 30.

3. There is *conditio ſine qua non*, or a condition without which the foreſaid bleſſings of pardon and eternal life, cannot be enjoyed: ſo repentance and new obedience may be called conditions of this ſort; in regard they are abſolutely neceſſary for all Chriſtians; partly as the concomitants, fruits, and evidences of a true faith; and partly to prepare and make us meet for the inheritance of the ſaints in light, Luke viii. 3. Zech. xii. 10. Col. i. 10, 12. Heb. xii. 14.

Q. *Doth it not detract from the grace and freeneſs of this covenant, and afford ſomething to the creature whereof to boaſt, to ſay, that the covenant requires any condition on our part?*

A. If any act or duty required of us in this covenant were to be performed by our natural ſtrength, or by the help of common grace; or if it did give a right to the bleſſings of the covenant in any meritorious way, either by way of congruity or condignity in the Popiſh ſenſe; then indeed, it would derogate from the free grace of this covenant; wherefore, with all ſound Proteſtants we muſt abhor all thoughts of ſuch duties, works, or conditions as theſe. But when we call faith a condition, and underſtand it only of a gracious inſtrument or qualification in the elect, purchaſed for them by Jeſus Chriſt, abſolutely promiſed by God in this covenant, and wrought in them by the Holy Ghoſt; a grace that receives all from God, and gives the entire glory to God: ſuch a conditionality of faith is noways inconſiſtent with a covenant of grace, or of promiſe, Eph. ij. 5, 8.

Q. *Since faith is not performed by our ſtrength, but wrought in us by the Holy Spirit, how can it be ſaid to be a condition on our part?*

A. Tho' the grace and power of believing be derived from God's Spirit, yet the act of believing is properly the act and deed of the gracious ſoul, as being exerted and performed by its faculties; and hence it is that the Spirit of God ſtyles theſe

truly our works, that are wrought in us by his grace, Isa. xxvi. 12. 'Lord thou hast wrought all our works in us.' They are still termed our works, though performed by his grace.

Q. *May not love, repentance, humility, self-denial, holiness, and new obedience be called conditions of this covenant as well as faith, seeing these are likewise required of all that enter into this covenant, and many blessings of this covenant, are also suspended until the performance of them?*

A. There is a very great difference betwixt the conditionality of these graces and that of faith, as I shall afterwards make appear. In the mean time, I own, if condition be taken in a large sense, for every thing, duty, or qualification, that is necessarily required of those that enter into this covenant; then indeed all the forementioned graces and qualifications may be called conditions or terms in this covenant; and some of these terms, conditions, or qualifications are necessary as antecedents unto our entering into this covenant, others as concomitants of it, and others as consequents to it, though indeed they are also freely promised to the elect.

Q. *What are these terms or qualifications, that are required as antecedents unto our entering into this covenant?*

A. Such as, hearing of the word, some knowledge of God, and sense of our misery, and despair of help in ourselves, and a sight of our need of a Mediator, &c. all these may be called antecedent or preparatory conditions of our entering into covenant, in regard they are necessarily and previously requisite unto it, Mat. ix. 12. Luke xv. 16, 17. John iv. 10.

Q. *What are these terms or qualifications, that are required as concomitants?*

A. Such as repentance, love, humility, self-denial, spiritual hunger, &c. these may be called concomitant conditions of our entering into this covenant, in regard they do necessarily accompany it, and are inseparable from true faith, Mark i. 15. Acts ii. 38. Luke vii. 47. Luke ix. 23. Phil. iii. 3, 8. Mat. v. 6.

Q. *What are these terms or qualifications, which are required as consequents unto our entering into this covenant?*

A. Such as, evangelical obedience, taking up the cross, patience, perseverance, &c. these we find laid down as fruits an evidences of faith, and required as necessary conditions, of enjoying and possessing the ends of this covenant, viz. eter

life and glory, Gen. xvii. 1, 2. Luke ix. 23 Heb. xii. 14. Heb x. 36, 38. I ſay, all theſe may be called conditions or terms in this covenant, in the ſenſe before ſpecified; as being duties and qualifications neceſſarily required of all thoſe that enter into it; and ſo we find theſe words, conditions and terms, uſed by many ſound Proteſtant divines.

Q. *What is the difference betwixt the condition of faith, and theſe other conditions required? Or what preference hath faith to theſe, in reference to this covenant?*

A. Repentance, and the other graces and qualifications before-named are only conditions of certain connection, without which we cannot be juſtified, united to Chriſt, or inherit his purchaſed glory: but faith is the only inſtrumental, uniting and applying condition of our juſtification, by and thro' which, as a mean and inſtrument, we are actually juſtified, united to Chriſt, and entitled to all the bleſſings of his purchaſe. It far excels all other graces, in regard it hath a peculiar influence on our juſtification, and union with Chriſt. It doth that noble office to us, which no other grace or act of ours is capable of, becauſe of its ſpecial aptitude and fitneſs for taking hold of the Redeemer, and cloſing with his righteouſneſs. Hence we are frequently ſaid to be juſtified by faith, but never by repentance, love, or any other grace. And the righteouſneſs that doth juſtify us, is oft called the righteouſneſs of faith, and by faith. And it is ſo called, to teach us, that as the righteouſneſs of Chriſt is the only meritorious condition of our juſtification and our partaking of the great bleſſings of the covenant; ſo faith is the only inſtrument and applying condition thereof, Rom. iv. 13. Rom. x. 6. Phil. iii. 9. Gal. v. 5. Heb. xi. 7.

Q. *Doth faith juſtify and entitle us to the bleſſings of the covenant, as a work, grace, or habit in us, of ſpecial excellency and worth before God?*

A. Not at all; for if it be conſidered as a work or grace in us, it hath not any more intrinſic worth or value, than other gracious habits, nor any more influence on our juſtification before God, than other graces have, which is indeed none at all. Faith then, doth not any ways juſtify us upon the account of its own worth, or as it is a work or grace of ours: but only as it is an inſtrument having a peculiar fitneſs, as the hand of the ſoul, for apprehending of Chriſt, and applying his righteouſneſs, which is the only ground of our juſtification

before God. And upon this account only it is, that faith is preferred to all the reſt of the graces, and called the only condition of the covenant of grace on our part.

Q. *Why is Chriſt called the Mediator and Surety of the covenant of grace?*

A. 1. He is called the Mediator of it, becauſe he graciouſly interpoſeth betwixt God and man, who were at variance, and by his blood and Spirit reconciles them together, and brings them into a covenant of peace and friendſhip.

2. He is called Surety of this covenant, becauſe he graciouſly undertakes for both parties fulfilling their parts of it, viz. that God ſhall perform all his promiſes to the elect, and that they ſhall do whatever God requires of them, 1 Tim. ii. 5. Heb. ix. 15. Heb. vii. 22.

Q. *Doth God need any ſurety or cautioner on his part?*

A. Not at all, upon his own account, for he is the faithful and immutable God, 'for whom it is impoſſible to lie,' or falſify his promiſe. But only on our account, for our guilt having made us ſuſpicious, that God would not accept, or dwell with ſuch unworthy creatures; it was requiſite for our comfort, that the Son of God ſhould be Surety to us, for the performance of theſe promiſes, that are truly ſo great in themſelves, and may juſtly be aſtoniſhing to our thoughts.

Q. *Is this covenant univerſal, or made and entered into, with all men, as the firſt covenant was?*

A. No; it is only made and entered into, with ſuch as accept the offers and terms of it, and theſe are none but the elect, Iſa. lv. 3. Ezek. xi. 19, 20. Heb. viii. 10. Rom. ix. 4. Rom. xi. 5. 7.

Q. *Is this covenant offered to none elſe?*

A. Chriſt and the benefits of this covenant are tendered to all that hear the goſpel, without exception: and this is plain from the many general calls and invitations of Chriſt to loſt ſinners, with the promiſes thereto annexed, which we have recorded; together with his peremptory commands, that require every man to come to him, and believe in him, and that under the pain of damnation, Prov. i. 20, 21, 22, 23. Prov. viii. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. Iſa. xlv. 22. Iſa. lv. 1. Mark xvi. 15, 16. Acts ii. 38, 39 Rev. iii. 17; 18. Rev. xxii. 17.

Q. *Have all men, even the worſt, ſufficient warrant from theſe general calls, commands, and promiſes to come to Chriſt, and take hold of his covenant, with all its benefits and promiſes*

A. Yes, they do it warrantably without any fear of preſumption, firmly expecting welcome upon their coming. Nay, they hainouſly ſin againſt God and their own ſouls, if they neglect to do it, Iſa. li. 3, 4, 5. John iv. 37. Heb. ii. 3. Heb. iv. 1, 2.

Q. *Why is the covenant offered and tendered to all the hearers of the goſpel indefinitely, ſeeing it is only made with a certain number of them, viz. the elect?*

A. Becauſe it hath ſo pleaſed a wiſe and ſovereign God, who doth all things according to the counſel of his own will, and is not bound to give account of his matters. Yet we may adventure to ſay, that he doth it for theſe ends, namely, that he may proclaim the ſufficiency and perfection of Chriſt's ranſom, together with the freeneſs and fulneſs of divine grace, as a ſufficient foundation for all to believe, and flee to Chriſt for refuge. And alſo, that by this method, the elect may be gathered out of the multitude, and the refuſers of Chriſt left without excuſe, Eph. i. 11. Job xxxiii. 13. Mat. xx. 16. Luke xv. 22. Heb. ii. 3. Heb. xi. 13, 14.

Q. *Is there any way to ſalvation, but by the covenant of grace, and Chriſt its Mediator?*

A. No, Acts. iv. 12. 1 Cor. ii. 13. Gal. ii. 16.

Q. *How then were the faithful ſaved, who lived under the law, before Chriſt's coming in the fleſh?*

A. Though they had a dark and legal diſpenſation of the myſtery of grace, yet they were under the ſame covenant, and ſaved in the ſame method with us; for they had the ſame Mediator and Surety typified to them by Moſes and the ſacrifices; they had the ſame promiſes of remiſſion and ſalvation, which we have; and they were called to look through the types and figures, and act faith on Chriſt to come, as their only Saviour and Redeemer. And ſo they were juſtified by Chriſt in the method of the covenant of grace, and ſaved by virtue of the blood of Chriſt their ſurety, which was agreed upon to be ſhed for them in due time, according to the covenant of Redemption; upon which account he is called 'the 'Lamb ſlain from the foundation of the world,' Rev. xiii. 8. ſee alſo, Pſalm ii. 12. Iſa. xlv. 22. Acts x. 43. Gal. iii. 7, 8, 9. 1 Cor. x. 4.

Q. *Was the covenant of grace promulgate and diſpenſed to the church, always after one and the ſame manner?*

A. No; but in different manners; yea, ſo different, that

though the covenant of grace under all periods, hath ſtill been the ſame for ſubſtance; yet, becauſe of its gradual revelation and different adminiſtration, it is diſtinguiſhed into the Old and New Teſtament, or the old and new covenant of grace. The old covenant, being that which was adminiſtred before Chriſt's coming in the fleſh; and the new, that which is adminiſtred ſince his coming, Heb. i. 1. Jer. xxxi. 31. 2 Cor. iii. 6, 7, 8. Heb. viii. 13. Heb. ix. 1.

Q. *Wherein doth the diſpenſation of the new covenant of grace differ from that of the old?*

A. The Old Teſtament or covenant of grace was adminiſtred by promiſes, prophecies, ſacrifices, and other types; which did all point forth Chriſt as to come. But the new covenant of grace is adminiſtred by the preaching of the word, and diſpenſing of the ſacraments of Baptiſm and the Lord's Supper, which ſhew forth Chriſt as already come. Moreover the new diſpenſation of the covenant is far more eaſy, clear, efficacious, and extenſive than that of the old, Heb. x. 1, 2, 3, &c. 1 Pet. i. 10. Mat. xxviii. 19. 1 Cor. xi. 23. Heb. viii. 6, &c.

Q. *What way hath God taken to eſtabliſh and confirm the Covenant of grace to us?*

A. Several ways; 1. By his word of promiſe. 2. By his oath. 3. By the death and blood of his Son. 4. By outward ſigns and ſeals, commonly called ſacraments, Gen. xvii. 7. Gen. xxii. 16, 17. Heb. vi. 13, to 18. Heb. ix. 16. 17. Rom. iv. 11.

Concerning the SACRAMENTS.

Queſt. *WHAT is the proper ſignification of the word Sacrament?*

A. It is not a ſcriptural word, more than the word Trinity is, yet ſeeing the thing ſignified is there, and the word is very ſignificant, it may be lawfully uſed. Anciently the word ſacrament was a military word, in uſe among the Romans, and ſignified the ſolemn oath which the ſoldiers took, to be true to their general: afterwards, it was uſed by eccleſiaſtical writers to ſignify any holy myſtery, and particularly the ſealing ordinances of Baptiſm and the Lord's Supper; and indeed

it is very applicable to them, seeing by receiving these seals, we solemnly engage ourselves to be the Lord's, and swear to stand by him as faithful soldiers, fighting under his banner, against all his enemies.

Q. *What is the true nature and use of a sacrament?*

A. It is a holy ordinance instituted by Christ in his church, and annexed as a seal to the covenant of grace; wherein by outward and sensible signs, Christ and the benefits of his mediation, are represented, sealed, and applied to those that are within the covenant, to confirm their interest in him, to strengthen and increase their faith and all other graces, to testify and cherish their love and communion one with another, to put a visible difference betwixt those that belong to the church, and the rest of the world: and solemnly to engage them to the service of God in Christ, according to his word, Gen. xvii. 7, 10. Rom. iv. 11. 1 Cor. xi. 24. Rom. xv. 8. Rom. vi. 3. Eph. iv. 5.

Q. *Why is it said to be an ordinance instituted by Christ in the Church?*

A. 1. To shew that Christ is the sole king and head of the church, who alone hath the power to appoint her ordinances. 2. To distinguish the sacraments of Christ's institution, from those of Popish invention, viz. the five bastard sacraments, of *ordination, confirmation, penance, marriage, and extreme unction:* none of which are instituted by Christ for sacraments, nor have they the parts of true sacraments, and none of them are seals of the covenant of grace.

Q. *What are the parts of a sacrament?*

A. Every sacrament hath two parts; the one external and earthly; and the other spiritual and heavenly. There is an outward sensible sign, that doth represent, convey, seal and apply the spiritual benefit thereby signified.

Q. *What is a sensible sign?*

A. That which is obvious to the outward senses, of hearing, seeing, tasting, smelling, or feeling. And such are both the sacramental elements and sacramental actions.

Q. *What things do sacraments signify and seal?*

A. 1. As they are signs, they signify and represent the grace and good-will of God in Christ to his covenanted people. 2. As they are seals, they ratify and confirm his peoples right to all the blessings and promises of the covenant, and likewise their engagements to new obedience.

Q. *Is not the word alone sufficient to salvation? What need is there for sacraments?*

A. It is enough to satisfy us, that the infinitely wise God hath thought fit to adjoin sacraments to his word, as necessary means of his peoples salvation and comfort: and since he hath thus graciously appointed them; it becomes us with reverence, thankfulness, and diligence to receive them, and to judge the contempt or abuse of them a hainous sin before God.

Q. *How doth the word and sacraments differ as means of salvation?*

A. In several things; 1. The word is directed to the bodily ear; but the sacraments to the eye and other senses. 2. The word is preached to all without exception; but the sacraments belong to none but the members of the church. 3. The word is the ordinary mean of begetting faith; but the sacraments are means for confirming and increasing it, Mark xvi. 15. Acts xviii. 36. Gen. xvii. 7. 1 Cor. iii. 5. Rom. iv. 11.

Q. *Why hath God adjoined sacraments to the word?*

A. That he might give a further proof of his condescending goodness, and tender concern for his peoples good. It is wonderful condescension in God to dispose his grace into a covenant form, and enter into a paction with us; but it is yet more, to be content to add seals to it, for our further confirmation and consolation.

2. That they might serve to awaken the affections and excite grace. Sacraments are, as it were, a visible gospel, the offers of free love, and benefits of Christ's purchase, are thereby exposed to the eye, as the word doth sound them in the ear. God knows our stupidity and dulness, that we are much more affected with things that we see with our eyes, than that which we only hear.

3. That he might provide against that prevailing plague of unbelief in his people; and strengthen their weak faith, by giving them sensible signs of his love, and visible pledges of their interest in it. For (as Christ said to the nobleman of Capernaum, John iv. 48.) 'Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe.'

Q. *Are the sacraments efficacious to work grace in all that partake of them?*

A. No; for we read of baptism administred to Simon Magus who still remained a naughty man; and that the Lord

ſupper may be received by perſons unworthy, Acts viii. 23. Luke xiii. 26, 27. 1 Cor. xi. 27.

Q. *Whence have the ſacraments their efficacy?*

A. 1. Negatively, they have it not from themſelves, *ex opere operato*, according to the Papiſts: nor from the intention or holineſs of the miniſter that diſpenſeth them. But, 2. Poſitively, they have it from Chriſt's bleſſing, and the Spirit's working in and by them upon the ſouls of ſuch as partake of them. It is only Chriſt who by his Spirit puts life and virtue in the ſacraments, and makes them effectual means for conveying and applying his ſaving benefits to his peoples ſouls.

Q. *What were the ordinary ſacraments of the Old Teſtament diſpenſation?*

A. Circumciſion and the paſſover, which are now abrogated by the coming of Chriſt, who was typified by them.

Q. *Hath not Chriſt appointed ſacraments under the New Teſtament diſpenſation in the room of theſe which he aboliſhed?*

A. Yes; viz. Baptiſm and the Lord's Supper.

Q. *Are not the ſacraments both of the old and New Teſtament for ſubſtance the ſame?*

A Yes; for they both repreſent and exhibit Jeſus Chriſt, and the ſame ſpiritual benefits and mercies through him, Rom. iv. 11. 1 Cor. x. 1.

Q. *Is there no difference betwixt them?*

A. Yes; in ſeveral reſpects. 1. The old ſacraments repreſented Chriſt as to come; but the new as already come. 2. The old repreſented Chriſt more darkly; but the new more clearly and plainly. 3. The old were only to endure till Chriſt's coming in the fleſh; but the new until Chriſt's coming in glory. 4. Their outward ſigns differ much, one from another.

Q. *How doth it appear that circumciſion and baptiſm are the ſame in ſubſtance?*

A. In reſpect they are both ſacraments for initiation, typifying and repreſenting our natural pollution and original guilt, the neceſſity of being purified from carnal affections, and the way of our ſalvation by the ſhedding of Chriſt's blood.

Q. *How doth it appear that the paſſover and the Lord's Supper are the ſame for ſubſtance?*

A. By the following things. 1. They both repreſent Chriſt crucified, and commemorate his love in delivering his people from the bondage of ſin and Satan.

2. The Iſraelites behoved to prepare themſelves for keeping the paſſover, for ſome time before; particularly they kept the paſchal lamb four days in their houſes, before it was killed; during which time, (as their writers tell us) it was tied to their bed-poſts, that by their conſtant hearing of its bleatings, they might be excited to look back and remember their ſore bondage in Egypt, and their gracious deliverance from it; and alſo to look forward and remember the ſufferings and agonies of the Meſſiah for their ſins. In like manner, communicants ought to prepare themſelves for the Lord's ſupper, by ſerious and frequent meditating upon their miſery by nature, the evil of ſin, and the bitter agonies which Chriſt endured in delivering them from it.

3. As the paſchal lamb was roaſted with fire; ſo Chriſt in the Lord's ſupper is held forth, as ſcorched with the fire of God's wrath.

4. As the paſchal lamb behoved to be eaten, and that wholly; ſo Chriſt in the Lord's ſupper muſt be received by faith, and that wholly in all his offices.

5. As the lamb in the paſſover, behoved to be eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs; ſo Chriſt muſt be received in the Lord's ſupper, in truth and ſincerity with bitter repentings for ſin.

6. As the lamb in the firſt paſſover, was to be eaten by the Iſraelites in haſte, with their loins girt, ſtaves in their hands, and ſhoes on their feet; ſo Chriſt in the Lord's ſupper muſt be received without delay, with holy reſolution and preparation for our ſpiritual journey, travelling as pilgrims through the wilderneſs of this world.

7. As the blood of the lamb was to be ſprinkled on their door-poſts and lintels, for ſecuring them from the deſtroying angel, that cut off the Egyptians firſt-born; ſo in the Lord's ſupper, we muſt have our whole ſouls beſprinkled with Chriſt's blood by faith, for ſecuring us from the ſtroke of divine juſtice: nay, alſo our outward converſation that is viſible to the world muſt be ſprinkled, that they may take notice of our having been with Jeſus, Exod. xii. 1 Cor. v. 7, 8.

Concerning BAPTISM.

Queſt. *WHAT is the true nature and uſe of baptiſm?*

A. Baptiſm is a ſacrament of the New Teſtament, annexed as a ſign and ſeal of God's covenant with believers in Chriſt; wherein Jeſus Chriſt hath ordained the waſhing with water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt; to be a ſign, not only of the ſolemn admiſſion of the party baptized into the viſible church; but alſo a ſign and ſeal of his intereſt in the covenant of grace, with all its bleſſings purchaſed by the blood of Chriſt, repreſented by that water, and particularly to ſignify and ſeal his ingrafting into Chriſt, his remiſſion of ſins by his blood, and regeneration by his Spirit; his adoption into God's family, and reſurrection unto everlaſting life. And likewiſe his ſolemn dedication to God through Jeſus Chriſt; and entering into an open and profeſſed engagement to be the Lord's, wholly, and only his; and to walk with him in newneſs of life, Matth. xxviii. 19. Gal. iii. 27. Mark i. 4. Tit. iii. 5. Eph. v. 26. Rom. vi. 4, 5, 6, 11. 1 Pet. iii. 21.

Q. *How many ſorts of baptiſm are mentioned in ſcripture?*

A. We read of a ſix-fold baptiſm. 1. The Leyitical baptiſms or waſhings, Heb. ix. 10. 2. The baptiſm of tears, or repentance, Luke vii. 38. 3. The baptiſm of affliction, blood, or martyrdom: Thus Chriſt and the martyrs were baptized, Matth. xx. 22, 23. Luke xii. 50. 4. The baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt, or the conferring of the gifts of the Holy Ghoſt, Acts i. 5. 5. It is ſometimes put for the Chriſtian faith or doctrine of baptiſm, Acts xviii. 25 6. There is the ſacrament of baptiſm, which we now ſpeak of.

But, principally, baptiſm is two-fold, external and internal, *fluminis & flaminis*, of water, and of the Spirit.

Q. *What parts doth the ſacrament of baptiſm conſiſt of?*

A. Of two parts, 1. The outward and viſible part ſignifying. 2. The ſpiritual and inviſible part thereby ſignified.

Q. *What is the outward part ſignifying?*

A. The waſhing the body with water, and the uſing of words of inſtitution.

Q. *What is the ſpiritual part ſignified by the waſhing with it?*

A. 1. The waſhing away of the guilt of ſin, or our juſtification by the blood of Chriſt applied to the ſoul. 2. The waſhing away of the filth of ſin, or our ſanctification by the Spirit of Chriſt in the work of regeneration, Rev. i. 5. John iii. 5.

Q. *What is ſignified by the words of inſtitution, or baptizing in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt?*

A. 1. It ſignifies that miniſters have authority from God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, to adminiſter this ſacrament of baptiſm, Matth. xxviii. 18, 19.

2. It ſignifies the baptized perſon his entering into a ſolemn covenant with God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, his chuſing and taking God the Father as his God and Father; God the Son as his Redeemer and Saviour; and God the Holy Ghoſt as his guide, ſanctifier, and comforter: alſo it ſignifies his conſecration to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt; and his coming under engagements to the faith, profeſſion and obedience of the holy Trinity: together with his ſolemn renouncing of the three great enemies of the holy Trinity, viz. the devil, the world, and the fleſh, 2 Cor. viii. 5. 1 Pet. iii. 21.

Q. *Why is the blood of Chriſt, and bleſſings of the new covenant repreſented here by water?*

A. Becauſe of the near reſemblance they have to one another in theſe things; 1. Water hath a cleanſing virtue, for taking away filth and pollution from the body, ſo Chriſt's blood cleanſes the ſoul from ſin.

2. Water hath a refreſhing virtue to a thirſty traveller, and the dry withered herbs; ſo Chriſt's blood and benefits are moſt refreſhing to the poor thirſty ſoul.

3. Water hath an extinguiſhing quality, for quenching fire; ſo the blood of Chriſt quencheth both the fire of God's wrath, and the fire of our luſts.

4. Water hath a mollifying virtue, it ſoftens the hardened earth, ſo Chriſt's blood hath ſoftened many a hardened heart into tears, and melted them into a compliance with God's will.

5 Water is moſt neceſſary, our bodies could not live or ſubſiſt without it; ſo the blood of Chriſt is the moſt neceſſary and uſeful thing in the world; our ſouls without it would periſh eternally.

6. Water is cheap and free to all, no man is denied of it; ſo the blood of Chriſt is offered freely to all that pleaſe to accept of it.

7. Water hath no effect nor operation upon us, unleſs it be ſprinkled or applied; ſo neither hath the blood of Chriſt any effect upon us, till it be applied by faith.

Q. *Is there no ſacramental element or rite to be uſed in baptiſm, but the waſhing with water, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt?*

A. No; for though the Papiſts do join herewith, ſalt, ſpittle, oil, and the ſign of the croſs, yet they have no warrant for theſe from Chriſt or his Apoſtles; and therefore they are not to be regarded, but as ſuperſtitious and antichriſtian additions to Chriſt's holy inſtitution.

Q. *For what ſpecial end hath the Lord appointed baptiſm?*

A. They are various; 1. To be a notour badge of our Chriſtian profeſſion, to diſtinguiſh us from Jews, Pagans, and Mahometans.

2. To be a teaching ſign or ſymbol, for inſtructing us in the knowledge of the great articles of the Chriſtian faith; particularly, it is a looking-glaſs to ſhew us our natural pollution and miſery by reaſon of ſin, and our remedy provided in the blood of Chriſt.

3. To be a confirming ſeal of God's covenant, for aſſuring believers of the reality of his love, the truth of his promiſes, and the certainty of their title to the childrens inheritance, and (as it were) for giving them infeftment and ſeaſing in all the bleſſings of Chriſt's purchaſe: even as men are inveſted in the right, and put in the poſſeſſion of a bargain by formalities of law; as a houſe is delivered us by a key: or a field by ſtone and earth.

4. To be a gracious channel and means for conveying grace, and ſoul-purification, and ſpiritual bleſſings, to thoſe for whom they are deſigned.

5 To be an obligatory bond on our part, to be true and faithful to God, to renounce the ſervice of ſin and Satan, and to walk with God in newneſs of life.

6 To be a tryſting place for parents, to meet and treat with Chriſt concerning the ſalvation of their young ones. For all which ſee Gal. v. 3. Acts ii. 38, 41. Rom. iv. 11. Col. ii 11, 12. Acts xxii. 16. Eph. v. 26. 1 Pet. iii. 21. Luke xviii. 15, 16. Tit. iii. 5.

Q. *When God doth ſeal his covenant with believers at baptiſm; what things are engaged and ſealed on his part?*

A. 1. That he will be our God. 2. Receive and own us as members of his viſible church. 3. Give us a ſealed right to church ordinances and privileges. 4. Cut us off from the old ſtock of nature, and ingraft us into Chriſt. 5. Take us into his family, and under his providential care. 6. Entitle us to Chriſt's purchaſe and make over all the bleſſings and benefits of the new covenant, viz. remiſſion of ſin, regeneration, adoption, ſanctification, reſurrection to life, and eternal glory and happineſs.

Q. *Doth baptiſm ſeal and apply theſe things equally to all who are baptized?*

A. No; for to elect infants and believers in reality, it ſeals and applies theſe things abſolutely. But to theſe who are only believers in profeſſion it ſeals and applies conditionally, i. e. upon ſuppoſition that they be what they profeſs.

Q. *Have unbelievers then no benefit by their baptiſm?*

A. Yes; in ſo far as they are hereby diſtinguiſhed from the reſt of the world, externally ſeparated from Satan, the world, and the fleſh, are dedicated to Chriſt and his ſervice, become members of the viſible church, and have a ſealed right to goſpel ordinances and privileges, if they do not forfeit theſe by their after carriage, Rom. ix. 4. 1 Cor. vii. 14.

Q. *Is there any thing engaged or ſealed on our part in baptiſm?*

A. Yes, viz. that we will be the Lord's, i. e. that we will be wholly the Lord's, ſoul and body, in all we are, or have. 2. That we will be only the Lord's, and therefore renounce all other lords and maſters, the devil, the world and the fleſh. 3. That we will be the Lord's by practice as well as profeſſion, that we will mortify ſin, wage war againſt Chriſt's enemies, fight under Chriſt's banner, and ſtudy conformity to him, Rom. vi. 4, 5, 12. 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20. 2 Cor. viii. 5. 1 Pet. iii. 21.

Q. *Are the benefits ſealed to believers immediately conferred upon them, at the moment of baptiſm?*

A. Though a ſealed right to theſe be then given them; yet the efficacy of baptiſm is not neceſſarily tied to that moment of time wherein it is adminiſtred; for God being a moſt free agent makes this ordinance effectual, and confers his grace when, and how he pleaſeth; beſides the fruit and power of

baptiſm, reacheth to the whole courſe of a believer's life, John iii. 5, 8.

Q. *Doth not baptiſm remove original ſin, and confer regenerating grace to all the partakers of it?*

A. No; for many partake of baptiſm who are unregenerated ſtill: baptiſm of its own nature, or by itſelf operates nothing; but only as the Spirit of God, (the author of grace) doth concur therewith: and being a free agent, he works grace before, at, or after baptiſm as he pleaſeth. And for original ſin, it is not then taken away from believers themſelves, except as to its guilt and dominion, (if it pleaſe the Spirit to co-operate at that time, and apply the blood of Chriſt) but as to its pollution and inherence, it remains in part during their whole lives, as is ſadly verified by the complaints of the beſt of God's people, Pſal. li. 5, 6, 7. Rom. vii. 23, 25. Acts viii. 13, 23.

Q. *What is the neceſſity of baptiſm?*

A. It is neceſſary in reſpect of the command of Chriſt, who hath appointed it as a ſign and ſeal of his covenant, and an external means of ſalvation; and therefore ought to be held in reverence, and ſought for with all due care: and to contemn or neglect this ordinance of Chriſt's inſtitution, is a very hainous ſin, Matth. xxviii. 19. Luke vii. 30. Acts xvii. 14. Exod iv. 24, 25.

Q. *Is outward baptiſm abſolutely neceſſary to ſalvation? Or are they damned who die without it?*

A. It is not the want, but the contempt of this ordinance that expoſeth to damnation; for the converted thief wanted baptiſm and was ſaved; beſides it would be a great injury to free grace, and a horrid thing in itſelf, to ſay, that it is in the power of wicked men to damn the ſouls of others, by their wilful neglect of this ordinance, or that the Iſraelites infants, who died before the eighth day, or while they were in the wilderneſs, were all damned; neither are parents guilty in this matter, if they do not neglect this ordinance of Chriſt, when and where it may be had, Rom. iv. 11. Acts x. 2, 4, 22, 31, 45, 47.

Q. *Where ſhould baptiſm be adminiſtred?*

A. In the place of public worſhip, and in the face of the congregation, where the people may moſt conveniently ſee and hear; and not in private places.

Q. *What is the neceſſity hereof?*

A. In regard baptiſm is the public entry and door to Chriſt's houſe, or the ordinance whereby perſons are ſolemnly admitted into the church, and made members of Chriſt's family: and therefore it is neceſſary that the church ſhould be publicly called and aſſembled to the adminiſtration of this public church ordinance. And that for theſe reaſons,

1. That thereby, they may witneſs, homologate and conſent to the admiſſion of new members into the church or family of Chriſt.

2. That the engagements of parents, or the party baptized, may be public and ſolemn, before many witneſſes.

3. That there may be many to join in prayer for a bleſſing upon the ordinance. It is much for the intereſt of both parents and children, to have the prayers of all the godly in the congregation for them, on ſuch an occaſion; which to be ſure are far more prevalent and effectual, than the prayers of a few.

4. That the whole congregation may be edified by the diſpenſing of this ſolemn ordinance, and excited to remember and improve their own baptiſm, and be faithful in keeping the covenant engagements which they then ſealed before many witneſſes, and alſo to be humbled for former breaches.

Q. *To whom is baptiſm to be adminiſtred?*

A. Baptiſm is not to be adminiſtred to any that are out of the viſible church, and ſo ſtrangers from the covenants of promiſe, till they profeſs their faith in Chriſt and obedience to him; but infants deſcending from parents, either both, or but one of them, profeſſing faith in Chriſt and obedience to him, are in that reſpect within the covenant, and ſo to be baptized, Acts viii. 36, 37. Gen. xvii. 7, 10, Gal. iii. 9, 14. Acts i. 38, 39, 41, 1 Cor. vii. 14. Luke xviii. 15, 16. Rom. xi. 16.

Q. *To whom is baptiſm not to be adminiſtred?*

A. Not to heathens and infidels, or perſons openly ſcandalous; for theſe being without the covenant, and out of the viſible church, have no right to the ſeals thereof; neither have their infants, while they continue ſo: but if upon hearing the goſpel, they repent and believe, duly make profeſſion of their faith and obedience, they have a right to this ordinance, Eph. ii. 12. Mark xvi. 15, 16. Acts viii. 13, 36, 37.

Q. *Who properly have a right to baptiſm?*

A. All the members of the viſible church, and their infants, Acts ii. 39.

Q. *What is it you call the viſible church?*

A. It is a ſociety made up of thoſe who in all ages and places of the world, do profeſs Chriſt and the true religion; and of their children.

Q. *What is the inviſible church?*

A. The whole body of the elect that have been, are, or ſhall be gathered into one, under Chriſt their head.

Q. *Do all that are baptized become members of the inviſible church, and thereby ingrafted into Chriſt?*

A. No; for our baptiſm make us only members of the viſible church.

Q. *What is it to be really ingrafted into Chriſt?*

A. It is for ſinners to be cut off from the old ſtock of nature, and united to Jeſus Chriſt, that they may grow up in him, and bring forth fruit unto him; and this is done upon our believing.

Q. *Are adult perſons and infants to be baptized in the ſame way and method?*

A. No; for the adult, or perſons come to years, muſt firſt be inſtructed in the faith of Chriſt, and principles of Chriſtianity, and are to make profeſſion of the ſame, with confeſſion of their ſins, before they be baptized, according to the antient practice, Mat. iii. 6. Mat. xxviii. 19. Acts. viii. 38. But the infants of believers (of whom theſe things cannot be expected or required) are to be baptized without ſuch profeſſion or confeſſion, their parents undertaking as ſponſors for them.

Q. *But how ſhould infants be admitted to baptiſm, till they believe and confeſs their faith, ſeeing according to* Mark xvi. 16. *they muſt firſt believe, and then be baptized?*

A. That is only meant of adult perſons without the viſible church. And tho' infants do not actually profeſs their faith, as being incapable of it; yet they are to be ranked among believers, as being the children of believing parents: for infants are but parts of the parents wrapt up in another ſkin, and to be accounted but one perſon with them, as the root and branches are but one tree, according to Rom. xi. 16. We are to judge of children by their parents till they come to the uſe of reaſon, and be capable to chuſe their own way; and then indeed they may diſinherit themſelves by their degeneracy. But till then we are to judge of them by the parents, as we do of a graft taken from a tree and implanted in a new ſtock; for we judge of the graft by the tree from which it was taken, until it bear fruit by itſelf, whereby it may be diſcerned. It is

upon this account that God calls the children of his people, his children, and children born unto him, Ezek. xvi. 20. Now if children have a covenant-relation to God, or be within the covenant (as the children of believing parents certainly are) they have a right to the ſigns and ſeals of it alſo, Gen. xvii. 7. Deut. xxix 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15. Acts ii. 39.

Q. *Ought not infants according to this argument, to be admitted to the Lord's ſupper alſo?*

A. The infants of believers have indeed upon the ſame account a remote right to this ſeal likewiſe; though for the preſent they are incapable to receive it, as wanting the actual exerciſe of reaſon, which is abſolutely neceſſary in order to our examining ourſelves, and diſcerning the Lord's body; theſe being the indiſpenſible duties of all ſuch as partake of the Lord's ſupper, 1 Cor. xi. 28, 29.

Q. *Should they not for the ſame reaſon, be kept from the ſeal of baptiſm, ſeeing they underſtand not the nature of that ordinance, nor the duties of the baptized?*

A. 1. They underſtand as much of it as the Jewiſh infants did of circumciſion, at eight days of age; and yet that ordinance behoved not to be longer delayed. Now there is the ſame reaſon, for adminiſtrating the ſacrament of baptiſm to infants under the goſpel, that there was for circumciſion under the law, ſeeing baptiſm is now come in its room as the ſacrament of initiation or entrance into the church, which circumciſion then was. If by divine warrant, not only Abraham, but all his ſeed had a right to the initiatory ſeal of the covenant, Gen. xvii. 7, 10. then believers now, who are Abraham's children, and under the ſame covenant with him, muſt ſtill have the ſame privilege; ſeeing the ancient grant was never afterwards repealed, but expreſsly confirmed under the goſpel, according to Acts ii. 39. Gal. iii. 9, 14, 16.

2dly, Infants may reap the benefit of baptiſm, though they underſtand not its meaning. The infants Chriſt took up in his arms, Luke xviii. knew not his meaning, yet they got his bleſſing. An inheritance bequeathed to a poor child in the cradle, is of uſe to it, though it underſtands not the advantage at preſent, nor hath the comfortable poſſeſſion, till it come to years.

3dly, It is to be obſerved, that though the Jewiſh infants did partake of circumciſion, yet they were excluded from the paſſover; and that for the ſame ground, that we exclude our

infants from the Lord's ſupper, which is now come in its room, viz. the want of the actual exerciſe of reaſon. For none were to ſhare of the paſſover, but ſuch as could aſk concerning the meaning thereof, Exod. xii. 26. But this was not abſolutely needful for partaking of circumciſion, in regard that was only for conveying a right; but the other was for commemorating a benefit, which neceſſarily ſuppoſed underſtanding.

Q. *Is there any other ſcripture warrant for the baptiſm of infants, beſide that of the circumciſion of the Jewiſh children?*

A. Though that be a ſufficient warrant for it; yet we have more; for, 1. Chriſt commands his apoſtles to diſciple and baptize all nations, of which infants are no ſmall part; as our Saviour excludes none from the ordinance, ſo he limits no time or age for the diſpenſing of it: there was no need to give any expreſs charge concerning infants, ſeeing their privilege was ſettled for many ages before, and they ſtill in poſſeſſion of it, by the initiatory ſeal of circumciſion, which was the ſame in ſubſtance with baptiſm. This was never reverſed, but their right declared to continue, Acts ii. 30.

2. Infants are capable both of grace and glory, and conſequently are capable of baptiſm, which ſeals our right to theſe, Luke i. 15. Mat. xviii. 6. Luke xviii. 15.

3. Children of believers are pronounced holy, 1 Cor. vii. 14. i. e. federately holy, as being within the covenant; and therefore they muſt needs have a right to the ſeal of it.

4. Infant-baptiſm was univerſally practiſed in the ancient church, they deriving it from the apoſtles, whoſe example they followed in this matter; and of whom we have it ſeveral times recorded, that they baptized ſuch as believed with their whole houſeholds; ſuch as the houſes of Lydia, the jailor, and Stephanas, Acts xvi. 15, 33. 1 Cor. i. 16.

Q. *To whom pertains it to preſent the infants of the viſible church to baptiſm?*

A. It belongs properly to the parents, and not to theſe who are called god-fathers or god-mothers—Becauſe children have a right to baptiſm, only in and by their parents: and theſe only have a power both by the law of God and nature, to diſpoſe of their young ones, and to order their education; and they only are accountable to God for them. And, in the ſenſe of the law, their will is the childrens will. Upon all which accounts, parents only ought to preſent their infants to God in

baptiſm, and conſent for them to the covenant of grace, Joſh. xxiv. 15. Deut. xxix. 10, 11, &c.

Q. *What doth the parents bringing and preſenting their children in baptiſm import and ſignify in itſelf?*

A. It imports theſe things; 1. A public acknowledgment, that their children are defiled by original ſin, and need waſhing as ſoon as they come into the world.

2. That they are bound by the ties of nature and common juſtice, to do all they can, for their childrens help and relief in this miſerable ſtate; that they may (ſo far as lieth in them) repair the injury done them, by conveying original corruption to them.

3. That they believe no remedy can cure them, no fountain can cleanſe them, but that of Chriſt's blood, which is repreſented by the baptiſmal water.

4. That they willingly dedicate and devote their children to God, to be enrolled in his family, numbered among his children, and entirely diſpoſed of by him.

Q. *What are the ſpecial duties incumbent upon parents, on the occaſion of preſenting their children in baptiſm?*

A. 1. To wonder at God's grace and condeſcenſion, in taking ſuch pains on us, as to lay the great myſtery of godlineſs and ſcheme of our ſalvation before our eyes by viſible rites and ſigns, thereby to affect our ſenſes, and the more effectually to excite our minds to a ſerious conſideration of the great things which God hath done for us. Since the goſpel report which the word brings daily to our ears (concerning our miſery, and remedy, our ruin by ſin, and recovery by Jeſus Chriſt) makes but little impreſſion on us; he is pleaſed to give a perceptible view of theſe things by baptiſm to the eye, to try if our eyes will affect our hearts, according to Lam. iii. 51. And ought not this goodneſs to melt even the hardeſt heart?

2. To admire God's free grace and mercy, that he is willing to take both us, and our children into covenant with himſelf: that after the firſt covenant was broken on our part, he was content to enter into a ſecond (a covenant all of grace) and that with his own condemned rebel creature! Abraham fell upon his face when God was covenanting with him; and David was aſtoniſhed with admiration at it, Gen. xvii. 3. 2 Sam. vii. 19. And ſo ought we upon this occaſion.

3. Parents ought to ſearch and ſee, if they be really in co-

venant with God themſelves: for, when we diſpenſe this ſacrament, we are to look on the parents that claim the benefit of it to their children, to be perſons in covenant with God, otherwiſe their children have no right to the ſeal of it. Therefore it highly concerns parents on this occaſion, to enquire if they have as yet entered into covenant with God, by their own perſonal tranſaction, and renewing of their own baptiſmal dedication and engagements: And if they have dealt faithfully with God in this covenant, yea, or not.

4. Parents ought on this occaſion, to renew the covenant which they made with God in their own baptiſm, take hold of the covenant of grace for themſelves, accept of Jeſus Chriſt the Mediator of it, cloſe with his righteouſneſs, and dedicate themſelves, as well as their children to the Lord; and thus tranſact with God and Chriſt in ſecret. Which they are likewiſe publicly to own and renew (at the preſenting of their infants) by a ſolemn profeſſion of their faith in God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt; and dutiful obedience to him according to his word: believers ſhould rejoice to come with their children to baptiſm, becauſe every time they do it, God renews his covenant with them and theirs; as he did with Abraham at circumciſion, Gen. xvii.

5. They ought to be fervent in prayer, wreſtling with God for the purification and acceptance of their young ones through Chriſt's blood; and for a ſolemn bleſſing upon the ordinance to be diſpenſed to them; that God may join the inward and privy ſeal of his Spirit, with the outward ſeal of this ſacrament.

6. They ought to ſtudy to be well acquainted with the great truths of the Chriſtian religion, as contained in the holy ſcriptures, and agreeable thereto, ſummed in our Confeſſion of Faith, Larger and Shorter Catechiſm: that ſo they may be capable to inſtruct and train up their children in the knowledge of theſe truths, according to the engagements which they publicly take on. Alas! there is little conſcience made of ſuch ſolemn promiſes by many; they are ignorant of our excellent Confeſſion of Faith and Catechiſms, and will not ſo much as buy them, or read them over; notwithſtanding of their reiterated engagements on this occaſion.

7. They are to make a ſolemn ſurrender and dedication of their children to God in Chriſt, as children of his family, ſubjects of his kingdom, and members of Chriſt's myſtical

body: and that for the end they may be waſhen in Chriſt's blood, ſaved by his grace, guided by his Spirit, ruled by his laws, and diſpoſed of by his providence. Thus we are to bring and preſent our children to God in baptiſm, as living ſacrifices to him, acceptable through Chriſt Jeſus.

8. We are in the name and behalf of our infants (they being parts of ourſelves, as was ſhewed before) to conſent to the gracious offers and terms of the covenant of grace, and that they will be the Lord's wholly and only his. And for this end to teach them (when they come to underſtanding) the knowledge of God, and the way of ſalvation thro' Chriſt, according to his word; and to inſtruct them in the duties of the covenant, particularly, the neceſſity of faith, repentance, and new obedience. And becauſe children are more ready to be influenced by our examples than our precepts, we are to engage to ſhew them the copy of a holy life, family worſhip, and ſecret prayer, in our own converſation. Thus Abraham the father of the faithful, entered into covenant with God, for himſelf and his ſeed after him, Gen. xvii. 7, 9. And according to that Covenant, he "commanded his children, and "houſehould after him, to keep the way of the Lord," Gen. xviii. 19. And ſo believing parents under the goſpel, being under the ſame covenant with faithful Abraham, ought to "bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of "the Lord," Eph. vi. 4.

Q. *What are the duties incumbent upon the congregation, or thoſe that are witneſſes to the adminiſtration of the ſacrament of baptiſm?*

A. 1. Patiently to attend, and wait till it be done: for, to remove before the adminiſtration of baptiſm, as many do, argues both a contempt of Chriſt's ſolemn ordinance, which he hath inſtituted for his church's good; and want of charity to theſe who are to be baptized, in that they decline to ſtay and pray for them, and receive them into the communion of the viſible church. And likewiſe it ſhews that they have little regard to their own ſouls, when they turn their backs upon ſuch an excellent means of edification, as this is. Let ſuch conſider, whether it had been juſt and becoming for the whole congregation to have dealt ſo with reſpect to them, when they were baptized, as they deal now in reference to others. Stay till then, and pray for the members to be ingrafted, as others did for you.

2. To witneſs the adminiſtration of it, with a holy awe and becoming reverence to the great Author of it, and myſtery repreſented by it. Remember that it derives its authority and inſtitution, not from man, but from the exalted Lord of angels and ſaints. Had this ordinance been of man, it had been vilipended and come to nought many years ago; but being of divine original, it hath kept its authority throughout the whole Chriſtian world, for the ſpace of theſe 1700 years. Wherefore it becomes us all to pay a dutiful regard to the adminiſtration of it.

3. Admire the wonderful kindneſs of God to fallen man, that he pitied us, when wallowing in our blood and pollution, and provided a ſuitable remedy for us. Though he might in juſtice have ſuffered ſuch wretches to drop into the devil's arms and hell's flames from the very womb; yet, behold! he ſtretches out his merciful and fatherly arms to embrace us, aſſoon as we enter into the world; 'ſuffer little children (ſaith 'he) to come unto me,' to me their friend and Saviour.

4. Bleſs God that hath ordered your lot to be born within the pale of Chriſt's church, of Chriſtian parents who early preſented and dedicated you in ſuch a manner to God, whereby you got a ſealed right to goſpel ordinances and privileges, nay, to Chriſt and all the benefits of the new covenant upon the condition of your faith; ſo that now you have encouragement to come and claim your right; eſpecially you whoſe happineſs it is to be born of godly and believing parents, bleſs God for this mercy, plead your intereſt in the covenant, for your claim is certainly better than others; you may go to God as your father's God, and therefore plead he is yours too: For when God entered into covenant with your fathers, he made it both for them, and for you their ſeed: and how pleaſant is it to ſing with Moſes at the Red-ſea, Exod. xv. "He is my God, I will prepare him an habita-"tion; my father's God, and I will exalt him." But beware of thinking that your being of ſuch parents, neceſſarily entitles you to the ſaving bleſſings of the covenant, tho' you ſhould do nothing yourſelves; nay, if you put not in your claim when you come to age, you forfeit your right. Yet queſtionleſs, your birth ſtill entitles you to many external privileges and mercies; upon which account, it is ſaid, 1 Pet. iii. 21. 'The like figure unto Noah's baptiſm doth now ſave us;' i. e. as the ark (which was a type of baptiſm) wrought

a temporal ſalvation for all Noah's family; ſo baptiſm entitles the families of believers to many temporal privileges and bleſſings. But tho' all Noah's family was admitted into the ark, this did not entitle them to admiſſion into heaven; ſo neither will our outward baptiſm ſave us from the deluge of God's wrath, and bring us to heaven; and therefore the apoſtle adds for explication in the forecited verſe, 'Not the putting away 'of the filth of the fleſh, but the anſwer of a good conſcience 'towards God,' i. e. not the outward waſhing of the body with water; but the faithful anſwer of a reſolved ſoul, accepting of and adhering to the covenant ſealed in baptiſm: for at the firſt planting of Chriſtianity, people were generally grown up when baptized, and made anſwer publicly for themſelves, making profeſſion of their faith and obedience to the holy Trinity, and their renouncing the devil, the world, and the fleſh.

5. Bleſs God that you are born under the New Teſtament times, when the fountain for cleanſing ſinners is ſo fully opened in the word and ſacraments, that the ſtreams of it are daily ſo near you, and you invited to waſh therein. Our acceſs to the fountain is now plain and eaſy; it is not lock'd up, covered with leaves, or obſcured with types and figures, as under the law; we have now an open view of it: there is a wide vent made to its ſtreams, by Chriſt's death and wounds upon the croſs; and excellent channels framed for conveying it to us, viz. the preaching of the goſpel with its ſacraments. O how inexcuſable will we be for ever! if after all this we contemn the water of life, and die in our pollution.

6. Be concerned for the precious ſouls of thoſe that are to be baptized; pray fervently for them, that God may come and bleſs his own ordinance to them; give the inward grace with the outward ſeal; apply Chriſt's blood to the ſoul, as water is ſprinkled upon the body; that he may regenerate them by his Spirit, ſtamp them with his image, make them inſtruments of his glory: that they may riſe up, and do God better ſervice in their generation, than, alas, we have done in ours.

7. When you ſee and hear parents ſolemnly engaging for their children at their baptiſm; let ſuch as are parents, that have come under the like engagements, conſider how they have performed them. Do ye make conſcience of praying for your children, teaching them the principles of religion, admoniſhing them of their duty, warning them againſt ſin, and learn

ing them to read and pray? When took you them aſide to tell them of the vows you took on at baptiſm in their name, and preſs them to renew perſonally their baptiſmal covenant? O have ye not cauſe on this occaſion to be humbled for your neglect and ſhort-comings in performing your ſolemn engagements, and ſeek forgiveneſs through the blood of ſprinkling! O negligent parents! remember what a fearful meeting will be betwixt you, and your graceleſs children one day at Chriſt's tribunal, when they will come with accuſations and curſes in their mouths againſt you, for your unfaithfulneſs in performing your ſolemn engagements, with reſpect to their precious ſouls.

8. Let every one upon ſuch an occaſion call to mind his own baptiſm, how he was thus once preſented, dedicate and ſprinkled in like manner; and ſtudy by all means to improve his own baptiſm, which is a moſt needful, though much neglected duty.

Q. *How is it, that we ought to improve our baptiſm?*

A. 1. Be ſenſible of the greatneſs of the privilege and dignity conferred upon you, in being baptized in the name of Chriſt, and ſacramentally ſprinkled with his blood for the remiſſion of ſin; and think much upon it. Alas, there are many who never think on Chriſt, or his blood, and put no value upon their baptiſm. I have read of Lucian a ſcoffing Atheiſt, when he apoſtatized from the profeſſion of Chriſtianity, he mocked at his baptiſm, ſaying, 'He got nothing by 'it, but a ſyllable to his name; he was Lucian before, and at 'baptiſm was called Lucianus.' And what do many get by their baptiſm, but a name? Why, they undervalue their baptiſm, never think on it, nor ſtudy any way to improve it.

2. You ought perſonally and explicitly to renew your covenant and ſolemn dedication to God ſealed at baptiſm. It is not enough that you are Chriſtians by your parents dedication, but you muſt be ſo by your own alſo, by ratifying your parents deed, when ye are of age; otherwiſe your baptiſm will profit you nothing; nay, inſtead of profiting you, it will be a witneſs againſt you, if you do not perſonally tranſact with God in Chriſt, and give away yourſelves to the Lord in truth and ſincerity.

3. Improve your baptiſm, by labouring to ſecure and clear up your intereſt in the pardon of ſin, adoption, ſanctifying grace, and other bleſſings ſealed to you in that ſacrament.

Remember, that theſe bleſſings were only ſealed to you conditionally, upon your believing in Chriſt; and that they are not actually conferred, till you be ſenſible of ſin, and cloſe with Chriſt and his righteouſneſs. Go then, O penitent ſinner, apply to the blood of Chriſt by faith, which was ſacramentally applied to you at baptiſm, and plead with God for pardon of ſin; make uſe of your baptiſm as a ſtrong argument for it, ſay, "Lord, have I not thy ſeal, as well as thy "promiſe for my pardon? Got I not a pledge of it from "thee at my baptiſm? Behold thy ring and thy bracelets; "are they not thine? Lord, make good thy word, thy ſealed "promiſe;" I believe, Lord, help my unbelief.

4. Preſs alſo for the joyful ſenſe of this benefit of pardon ſealed to you in baptiſm; the having whereof, is the moſt comfortable thing in the world. We ſee the Eunuch, when he had got this ſeal of baptiſm, "went on his way rejoicing: "O now (thought he) my caſe is bleſſed, I am a pardoned "man, God hath received me into his family, and taken me "into covenant with himſelf, and implanted me a member of "his myſtical body: I that was the plant of a ſtrange vine, "am now ingrafted into a noble ſtock: and ſhall I not be "glad and rejoice in his ſalvation?" Thus, O believer, improve the ſeal of baptiſm, in order to your growing up to the comfortable aſſurance of your pardon of ſin, and adoption into God's family: ſeeing theſe bleſſings are irreverſibly promiſed and ſealed to you in that ſacrament.

5. Improve your baptiſm as a ſpur to holineſs and diligence in Chriſt's ſervice; forget not him whoſe name you bear, whoſe livery you wear, and whoſe colours you are ſworn to. Seeing you are ſolemnly dedicated to God, and all you have is conſecrated to him at baptiſm; O then live as theſe who are not your own; ſpend your ſtrength and time, not in ſerving ſin and the world, but in worſhipping of God, in loving, praiſing and glorifying of him, whoſe you are, and whom you ought to ſerve. Alas, there are many, who lift themſelves into God's ſervice by baptiſm, and yet turn deſerters, and go over to the devil's camp, taking on to fight againſt their King and Lord to whom they are ſworn. They live as if they had been ſolemnly devoted to, and baptized in the name of the curſed trinity of hell, the devil, the world, and the fleſh, inſtead of the ever bleſſed and glorious Trinity of heaven: Alas, they live as if they had renounced that, and not the other

which is certainly a moſt fearful guilt, and cannot miſs to be attended with a ſevere doom.

6. Be humbled for your manifold pollutions, your falling ſo much ſhort of the grace of baptiſm, and walking unſuitably to your ſolemn engagements. Have you not cauſe to lament before God, for forgetting and ſlighting the free love of God manifeſted to you in baptiſm; and for having ſo little recourſe to the fountain that was opened to you therein, for ſin, and for uncleanneſs; and that you feel ſo little of the efficacy of the precious blood of your Redeemer (which was repreſented and applied to you in that ordinance) for melting of your hearts, cleanſing you from ſin, and quickening you to holineſs.

7. Improve your baptiſm as a ſhield againſt Satan's temptations; 1. Are you tempted to deſpairing thoughts of mercy, or troubled with perplexing doubts and fears? Then remember the ſeal of free love you got in baptiſm. Chriſt himſelf was tempted after his baptiſm, to doubt of his filiation and ſonſhip; but gave Satan a peremptory repulſe; teaching us thereby to do the ſame. Luther ſaith, that all his anſwer to the devil, when he tempted him to deſpair, was, *baptizatus ſum, et credo in Chriſtum*, I am baptized into the belief of Chriſt. 2. Are you at any time tempted to ſin? Then remember your baptiſm: Luther alſo tells of a holy virgin, that when ſhe was tempted to ſin, replied, *baptizata ſum*, I am baptized. And indeed this is a ſufficient anſwer to all Satan's temptations, "I am baptized and dedicate ſolemnly "to God; I am not my own but the Lord's; I am ſworn "to Chriſt, and how ſhall I ſerve the devil?" Profanity in a Chriſtian is apoſtacy from Chriſt, and on the matter a renouncing of his baptiſm, which is a fearful, nay, a deviliſh ſin.

8. Improve it as an argument to courage and reſolution in time of danger or perſecution. Stedfaſtly adhere to the doctrine of the Trinity, in whoſe name you are baptized; be not aſhamed of Chriſt or his truths, ſeeing his name is called upon you, and you ſolemnly owned him before the whole congregation. "He that is aſhamed of me (ſaith Chriſt) "and of my words, in this ſinful and adulterous generation, "of him alſo ſhall the Son of man be aſhamed, when he "cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy angels," Mark viii. 38. Dionyſia, encouraged Majoricus her ſon, an African martyr, when he was going to die, with theſe words, "Remember, ſon, that thou was baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt."

Laſtly, Do not truſt to your baptiſm, and your having the name of Chriſt called upon you: an empty name and profeſſion of Chriſtianity will not ſave you; Simon Magus was baptized, and yet periſhed: many go with baptiſmal water on their faces, and ſacramental bread in their mouths to hell at laſt. Kings have both their common and privy ſeals. Reſt not in the outward ſeal, but ſeek the inward ſeal of God's Spirit, changing your natures, and applying the blood of Chriſt for cleanſing your ſouls.

Q. *Why may not baptiſm be adminiſtred to a perſon oftner than once, as well as the Lord's ſupper?*

A. 1. It is not commanded to be reiterated, as the Lord's ſupper is, 1 Cor. xi. 26.

2. Circumciſion under the Old Teſtament was not reiterated.

3. The nature of this ſacrament doth not require or allow of repetition: for as the Lord's ſupper is for nutrition, this is for initiation and implantation. This is the ſacrament of our new birth, and admiſſion into the church: now as we can be but once new born, and once entered into the church; ſo we are no oftner to be baptized, Tit. iii. 5.

Q. *Wherein doth the two ſacraments of baptiſm and the Lord's ſupper agree?*

A. In theſe things, 1. They have both the ſame author, Jeſus Chriſt. 2. They are both ſeals of the ſame covenant. 3. They ſignify and ſeal the ſame things, viz. Chriſt and his benefits. 4. They are both to be diſpenſed by miniſters of the goſpel, and by none elſe. 5. They are both to be continued in the church till Chriſt's ſecond coming.

Q. *Wherein then, do theſe ſacraments differ?*

A. In theſe things; 1. Baptiſm is to be adminiſtred but once, but the Lord's ſupper often. 2. There is but one element in the firſt, viz. water; but in the ſecond, there are two, viz. bread and wine. 3. The firſt may be adminiſtred to infants; but the ſecond, only to thoſe that are of years, and capable to examine themſelves. 4. The firſt doth ſignify our regeneration and admiſſion into the church: but the ſecond doth repreſent Chriſt as our ſpiritual nouriſhment, and ſealeth our continuance and growth in him. Baptiſm is the door of Chriſt's houſe, by which we muſt enter; but the Lord's ſupper is the table, at which the children muſt feed, and receive ſtrength.

Concerning the LORD's SUPPER.

Queſt. *WHAT is the Lord's ſupper?*

A. The Lord's ſupper is a ſacrament of the New Teſtament; wherein by giving and receiving bread and wine, according to Chriſt's appointment, his death is ſhewed forth; and the worthy receivers are not after a corporal or carnal manner, but by faith made partakers of his body and blood, with all his benefits, to their ſpiritual nouriſhment and growth in grace: to the confirming of their union and communion with Chriſt, renewing of their covenant with God, and their thankfulneſs to him; and their mutual love to, and fellowſhip one with another, as members of the ſame myſtical body, Matth. xxvi. 26, 27, 28. 2 Cor. xi. 23, 24, 25, 26. 1 Cor. x. 16, 17.

Q. *Who is the author of this ſacrament?*

A. The Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who is the glorious king and head of his church, to whom alone it appertains to inſtitute her ordinances.

Q. *What may we learn from its being Chriſt's ordinance?*

A. That we ought therefore to have a ſpecial regard to it, and beware of either neglecting or abuſing it.

Q. *When did Chriſt inſtitute this ordinance?*

A. In the ſame night wherein he was betrayed, and immediately after he and his diſciples had eaten the Jewiſh paſſover.

Q. *Was not that a very remarkable night?*

A. Yes, it was a night ever to be had in remembrance, being the laſt night before Chriſt's death, the night wherein he began his bitter agonies, and ſwate the bloody ſweat for us; a night wherein he ſaw heaven, earth, and hell, even juſtice, men, and devils, all drawn up in battle-array againſt him.

Q. *Why did he inſtitute this ſacrament at ſuch a time?*

A. For theſe reaſons; 1. Becauſe this ordinance was to commemorate his death, and ſo it was very fit to appoint it when he was going to die.

2. To encourage and ſtrengthen the hearts of his drooping diſciples, now when he was about to leave them (as to his bodily preſence) and they were to meet with many trials.

3. To ſhew the great weight and import of this ordinance:

had it not been a matter of the greateſt concern to our good and his glory, it had not taken up the thoughts and care of our great Redeemer juſt when he was going to die, and undergo ſuch unſpeakable ſufferings.

4. To lay the greater obligation upon us to attend this ordinance, and religiouſly to obſerve the charge and inſtructions he gave concerning it: as being the words of a dying man; nay, of a dying Saviour, who did more for us that night he ſpoke them, than all the angels of heaven, or relations on earth could or would have done.

Q. *Did not Chriſt's matchleſs love to us appear wonderfully, in chuſing ſuch a time to inſtitute this ordinance?*

A. Yes; 1. In that he minded and ſpoke ſo much of us, when his time was ſo ſhort. 2. That he provided ſo carefully for us, when his danger was ſo great. Which ſhews that ſtill his people lay neareſt his heart; that he regarded their intereſt more than his own, and preferred their comfort to his own ſafety: for though he ſaw all his enemies in a full march againſt him, and his *all* at ſtake, whence it might have ſeemed high time for him to be providing for his own ſafety: yet he ſpent much of the ſhort time he had, in providing a ſweet feaſt, and bequeathing rich legacies to his poor people that he was to leave behind him.

Q. *Why did Chriſt inſtitute this ſacrament immediately after the Jewiſh paſſover?*

A. To ſhew that the paſſover was thereby abrogated, and the Lord's ſupper come in its room.

Q. *Are we not bound to receive this ſacrament at night, after Chriſt's example?*

A. The circumſtances of time, place and company, in the firſt adminiſtration, not being eſſential to the ordinance, were not intended for our imitation. We are no more required to receive it at night, than to do it in an upper-room, with but twelve in company. Moreover the time was occaſioned by the paſſover, that was always eaten at night, and in private families: in the room whereof, and after which, the Lord's ſupper was to be inſtituted. But now when we have numerous aſſemblies for religious worſhip, the night would be highly inconvenient for them.

Q. *What are the uſual names and deſignations given to this ordinance?*

A. It is called the ſacrament of the Lord's ſupper, the

Lord's table, the communion, the breaking of bread, the cup of bleſſing, the feaſt, Chriſt's teſtament, the Euchariſt, 1 Cor. xi. 20. 1 Cor. x. 16. Acts ii. 46. 1 Cor. v. 8. Luke xxii. 20.

Q. *Why is it called the ſacrament?*

A. It is called ſo, by way of eminency: and becauſe here we take a moſt ſolemn oath of fidelity to our Redeemer.

Q. *Why is it called the Lord's ſupper?*

A. Becauſe, 1. It was inſtituted when Chriſt was eating the paſſover-ſupper with his diſciples, which was at night. 2. The ſupper was then accounted the principal meal of the family. 3. It is ordained only for thoſe that dwell in Chriſt's family, and abide with him both day and night.

Q. *Why is it called the Lord's table?*

A. Becauſe he is the author of it; yea, he is both the maker and the matter of this entertainment, the feeder and the food alſo.

Q. *Why is it called the communion?*

A. Becauſe in the right partaking of this ordinance, we have communion and fellowſhip with Chriſt, ſhare with him in the benefits of his death and purchaſe, and alſo have communion one with another.

Q. *Why is it called the breaking of bread?*

A. Becauſe in this ordinance, bread is broken and made uſe of, as the outward ſymbol and ſeal of Chriſt's wounded and broken body, with all the glorious benefits flowing therefrom.

Q. *Why is it called the cup of bleſſing?*

A. Becauſe, 1. In the uſing it, we bleſs God for his free love to us in Chriſt. 2. It contains offers, and ſealeth to us, in a ſacramental way, all the bleſſings of the new covenant.

Q. *Why is it called Chriſt's teſtament?*

A. Becauſe in this ordinance we have Chriſt's teſtament and latter will ſealed, and a copy of it put into the believer's hand, containing the rich legacies he hath left them.

Q. *Why is it called a feaſt?*

A. Becauſe hereby the believers are richly entertained by Chriſt, have ſweet intimacy with him, and great expreſſions of his love; and their ſouls are nouriſhed and ſtrengthened for duty. It is both a marriage-feaſt and a feaſt of commemoration.

Q. *Why is it called the Euchariſt by the ancients?*

A. It ſignifies the thankſgiving; becauſe, 1. When this ſacrament was inſtituted, it both began and ended with the giving of thanks. 2. Becauſe the great deſign of it is, to keep up the thankful remembrance of Chriſt's death and redeeming love. And believers when they partake, ſhould with their whole ſouls give thanks to God becauſe he is good; and ſing glory to God in the higheſt.

Q. *What parts doth the Lord's ſupper conſiſt of?*

A. Of two Parts; 1. The outward ſenſible ſigns. 2. The ſpiritual and heavenly things thereby ſignified.

Q. *What are the ſenſible ſigns made uſe of in this ſacrament?*

A. They are of three ſorts; 1. Sacramental elements. 2. Sacramental actions. 3. Sacramental words.

Q. *What are the ſacramental elements here made uſe of?*

A. Bread and wine.

Q. *What are the things ſignified and repreſented by them?*

A. The body and blood of Chriſt, with all the benefits and bleſſings flowing therefrom.

Q. *What is the neceſſity of two elements or ſigns in this ſacrament, bread and wine both, might not one ſuffice?*

A. The Lord hath thought fit to ordain them both to be uſed; and for theſe reaſons; 1. To ſhew us the fitneſs and certainty of his covenant, and to ſtrengthen his peoples faith the more in the belief of its promiſes. Why hath he annexed two ſeals or ſacraments to his covenant, but chiefly for this end. And why hath he inſtituted a two-fold ſign in this ſacrament, but for the ſame deſign. What Joſeph ſaid of Pharaoh's dream, is moſt applicable here, Gen. xli. 32. 'The dream is doubled to Pharaoh twice, becauſe the thing 'is eſtabliſhed of God, and God will ſhortly bring it to 'paſs.' In like manner, O believer, you may perceive here, by the doubling of the ſign, that the mercies and bleſſings ſealed in this ſacrament, are firmly eſtabliſhed to you, they are even 'the ſure mercies of David,' and God will ſhortly beſtow them upon you.

2. Theſe two ſigns are both appointed, becauſe of the unbelief, and hardneſs of our hearts. It is a ſad truth of us all, what Chriſt ſaid to the two diſciples going to Emmaus, Luke xxiv. 25. 'O fools, and ſlow of heart to believe what the 'prophets have ſpoken.' Nay, we are ſlow to believe even that which Chriſt, the great prophet himſelf hath ſpoken,

when he came in our nature to teach us. And therefore, for curing of this plague, the Lord gives us one ſign after another, as he did to the hard-hearted and unbelieving Iſraelites in Egypt, when he ſent Moſes to deliver them: to convince them the more of his truth and faithfulneſs, he gave Moſes two ſigns to ſhew them; and ſaith to him, Exod. iv. 8. 'And it ſhall come to paſs, if they will not believe, 'nor hearken to the voice of the firſt ſign, they will believe 'the voice of the latter ſign.'

3. Both theſe ſigns are appointed here, that we may have a more full and diſtinct repreſentation of Chriſt's death and ſufferings; and may be helped to be the more diſtinct in our meditations and acts of faith upon this wounded and bleeding Saviour.

4. To ſhew us the plentiful redemption that we have in Jeſus Chriſt. That there is in him not only ſufficiency, but all fulneſs and abundance. That he hath ſuitable ſupplies for our neceſſities, and complete nouriſhment for our ſtarving ſouls. There is here both the bread of life, and wine of conſolation.

Q. *Are not bread and wine too mean things, to be ſeals or ſigns of God's covenant?*

A. Although they are but common things in themſelves; yet having the ſtamp of divine inſtitution, they become highly valuable, in reſpect of their ſignification and ends. A ſmall piece of wax or lead is of little worth in itſelf; yet when appended to a charter by authority, it ſerves to give or confirm a right and title to a great inheritance. Of the ſame uſe are bread and wine in the Lord's ſupper; they are ſeals appended to God's covenant by divine authority, and ſerve to confirm the believers right to Chriſt's purchaſe, pardon of ſin, and eternal life, and ſo are highly valuable. Our gracious Redeemer thought fit to chuſe for this end, things that were not coſtly or rare, but common and eaſy to be had (though moſt uſeful in themſelves to human life) becauſe he would not be burthenſome to his people with any of his ordinances.

Q. *Why hath Chriſt choſen bread to repreſent his body?*

A. Becauſe of the reſemblance betwixt bread and Chriſt's bleſſed body, in theſe things; 1. Bread ere it be fit to nouriſh us, muſt be firſt ſown, and die in the earth; ſo Chriſt's body behoved to die, and be buried in the earth, in order to feed and nouriſh our ſouls.

2. Bread muſt be prepared by threſhing, bruiſing, and grinding in the mill, and baking in the oven; ſo Chriſt, that he might be a fit Saviour to us, was content to be bruiſed betwixt the millſtones of God's juſtice and our ſins, and to be ſcorched in the oven of his Father's wrath.

3. Bread thus prepared, is moſt excellent and uſeful for nouriſhing and ſtrengthening our bodies; yea, it is the moſt neceſſary thing in the world, none can live without it: hence it is oft call the ſtaff of bread, as being the ſupport of human life. So Chriſt's broken body is a moſt excellent and neceſſary means provided by God, for preſerving our ſoul's lives; without which we would eternally periſh.

4. Bread is moſt pleaſant, as it doth refreſh, ſtrengthen, and ſatisfy our hungry bodies: and hence it is called 'bread that ſtrengtheneth man's heart,' Pſal. civ. So Jeſus Chriſt and his broken body is moſt precious, pleaſant, and ſatisfying to a ſenſible needy ſinner. The hungry believing ſoul will highly prize this food, tho' others, who are full, and inſenſible of their wants, do loath and deſpiſe it.

5. Bread muſt be broken, eaten, and received into the ſtomach, before it can be of any uſe to the health and advantage of our bodies; ſo Chriſt's body muſt be broken, received, and fed upon by faith, ere it can be of uſe to the ſpiritual health, and advantage of our ſouls in this ſacrament.

6. Bread, thus received and eaten, becomes one with our bodies; ſo we, by a believing partaking of Chriſt's broken body, become one with him, John vi. 56.

Q. *Why hath Chriſt made choice of wine to repreſent his blood in this ſacrament?*

A. Becauſe of the reſemblance betwixt wine and his precious blood, in the following particulars;

1. Wine, in order to prepare it for our uſe, muſt be ſqueezed out of the grape, which for that end is cruſh'd and bruiſed in the wine-preſs; ſo our bleſſed Saviour was cruſhed in the wine-preſs of his Father's juſtice, till the precious juice of his ſacred body did guſh out, for the ſaving of our ſouls. None could afford our periſhing ſouls this remedy, but Chriſt alone: Hence he ſaith, Iſa. lxiii. 3. 'I have trodden the wine-preſs alone, and of the people there was none with me.'

2. Wine doth refreſh and cheer the heart of man, Pſal. civ. & Chriſt's blood doth much more cheer and refreſh the ſoul

of a humble penitent ſinner, that makes application of it by faith.

3. Wine doth warm the cold heart: much more doth Chriſt's blood warm the cold affections with the heat of divine love.

4. Wine is uſeful to animate and encourage the faint-hearted: much more doth Chriſt's blood revive and embolden the poor drooping and diſconſolate ſoul. It heartens him to go with a holy boldneſs to the throne of grace; yea, to 'walk through the valley of the ſhadow of death, and fear 'no ill.'

5. Wine is good for medicine: it cleanſes and cures; ſo the blood of Chriſt is the moſt medicinal thing in the world; for it cleanſes and cures the putrifying wounds of the ſoul, 1 John i. 7. Iſa. liii. 5.

6. Wine, however excellent in itſelf, can be of no uſe to us, unleſs it be drunk and applied; ſo Chriſt's blood, (though the moſt ſovereign thing in the whole world for our periſhing ſouls), will do us no ſervice, if it be not received and applied by our faith.

So much for the Sacramental Elements; let us come next to the Sacramental Actions.

Q. *What are the outward ſacramental actions in the Lord's Supper?*

A. They are two-fold, ſome on the part of the adminiſtrator; and ſome on the part of the receivers.

Q. *What are theſe actions on the adminiſtrator's part?*

A. They are four; as may be ſeen in Chriſt's example; 1. He took bread. 2. He bleſſed the bread and wine. 3. He brake the bread. 4. He gave both of them to his diſciples.

Q. *What is ſignified by the miniſter's taking of bread?*

A. It ſignifies God the Father his chuſing and taking Chriſt among men, to be a ſurety and ſacrifice for loſt ſinners, and his laying upon him as ſuch, the whole ſins of the elect, John iii. 16. Iſa. liii. 6. 2 Cor. v. 21.

Q. *What is ſignified by the bleſſing of the bread and wine?*

A. It ſignifies theſe things; 1. The conſecrating and ſetting apart of the bread and wine, from a common, to an holy

and ſacramental uſe; and that by ſolemn prayer for a bleſſing from heaven upon them.

2. This bleſſing being alſo expreſſed by the giving of thanks, it ſignifies a ſolemn thankſgiving to God for his aſtoniſhing grace and mercy to loſt ſinners in giving them a Saviour and ſurety; and alſo for his giving them this bleſſed ordinance for conveying and ſealing Chriſt's glorious purchaſe to them.

3. This bleſſing being of the ſame import with conſecrating or ſanctifying, it ſignifies God's ſending his Son into the world, ſanctified, bleſſed and furniſhed with all gifts and graces needful for the diſcharge of his mediatory offices, and for anſwering of his people's exigencies.

Q. *What is ſignified by the breaking of the bread in this ſacrament?*

A. It ſignifies the breaking and wounding of Chriſt's body, and the bruiſing of his ſoul for elect ſinners, in order to ſatisfy God's juſtice, pacify divine wrath, and purchaſe ſalvation for them. And that now the whole work of man's redemption is compleated by Chriſt's death, which is here repreſented by theſe elements and ſigns.

Q. *Is the breaking of the bread a neceſſary or eſſential action in this ſacrament?*

A. Yes; it being inſtituted by Chriſt, and practiſed by his apoſtles, with deſign to teach us the neceſſity of Chriſt's death, and that an unbroken Chriſt could not profit ſinners. And conſequently we may infer, that Papiſts and others, who diſpenſe the ſacrament with an unbroken wafer, do egregiouſly ſwerve from the inſtitution, and mar their ſouls profiting by this ordinance.

Q. *What is ſignified by the fourth ſacramental action, viz. Chriſt's giving the broken bread, and the poured out wine to his diſciples: and the miniſter's doing this after his example?*

A. It ſignifies theſe things; 1. God's gracious and free offering of his Son, and Chriſt's offering of himſelf to be ours, with all his purchaſe, upon our believing.

2*dly*, God's actual making over, giving, and ſealing Chriſt and all the benefits of the new covenant to the worthy receivers. For as truly as bread and wine are put into their hands, and given them to be their own, and diſpoſed of for their uſe; ſo as truly is Chriſt and all the benefits of the covenant made over, given and ſealed to them, to be their in

heritance and portion, and to be by them freely enjoyed and poſſeſſed as their own.

3dly, It ſignifies God's offering and giving Chriſt fully to us. For as he gives us not only the bread, but the wine alſo, that we may have complete entertainment: ſo he makes over and gives a full and complete Saviour to believing communicants. He gives Chriſt and all Chriſt to them; and all that is in him, all his offices, all his benefits, and all his promiſes. There is no promiſe reſerved, no bleſſings excepted, or kept back; all is theirs, 1 Cor. iii. 21, 22.

4thly, It ſignifies God's making a gratuitous donation and a free gift of Chriſt and all his purchaſe, to believing communicants. For as the ſacramental bread and wine are given freely by the miniſter to the communicants, without requiring any price or good deed for them: ſo Chriſt and all his purchaſe are made over and given to believers in a way of the freeſt grace, without any worth or deſert of theirs, or any thing done by them for which they are beſtowed, Iſa. lv. 1. Rev. xxii. 17.

5thly, The breaking, dividing, and diſtributing theſe elements among all the communicants, do ſignify that Jeſus Chriſt is really, though inviſibly preſent, dealing forth the effects and benefits of his death and ſufferings to all the worthy communicants, young and old, poor and rich, without exception of any. He is a moſt knowing and faithful ſteward in his Father's houſe, who will not paſs by the meaneſt of the family.

Q. *What is ſignified by the pouring out of the wine in the cup?*

A. Chriſt's ſuffering and pouring out his blood moſt freely and plentifully to waſh and ſave his people from their ſins; even as freely as the wine in the ſacrament is poured out to them. Hence it is ſaid, Iſa. liii. 12. 'He poured out his 'ſoul unto death.' i. e. he gave his life and ſoul ſo freely and willingly for us, as we pour out water out of a veſſel.

Q. *After what manner are the elements to be given to the communicants? Is the bread to be put into their mouths, or the cup into each of their hands by the miniſters?*

A. No; this is not agreeable to Chriſt's practice in the firſt inſtitution, nor with the table-poſture then in uſe, which he kept with his diſciples in time of the action; ſpeaking to them (at the giving of the elements) in the plural number,

'take ye, eat ye; drink ye all of it,' which import his giving the elements to those that sat next him, to be handed about from one to another; for had he given them to every particular man, he would have said, take thou. Besides, this practice of our Saviour with his disciples suits best with that familiar way of feasting common among people that are come to age and the use of their reason. And the communicants taking the elements into their own hands, doth carry some resemblance of the free and deliberate consent of faith, requisite in our receiving of Christ in the sacrament, John i, 12.

Q. *What are the outward sacramental actions, on the part of the communicant?*

A. They are these; 1. Their taking the bread, and the cup into their hands. 2. Their eating the bread, and drinking the wine. 3. Their dividing the elements among themselves and giving to one another. 4. Their doing all this sitting in a feasting posture.

Q. *What is signified by the communicants taking the bread and cup into their hands?*

A. Their cheerful stretching forth of the hand of faith to accept of a crucified Christ for their Saviour with all his benefits, as offered to them in the gospel; and the soul's hearty compliance with the gracious terms of that offer.

Q. *What is signified by our receiving of both the elements?*

A. Our taking, and receiving Christ wholly, as he is held forth and offered unto us in the gospel, without making exception of any of his offices or demands. We profess hereby that we are satisfied to take Christ as he is, his person, his offices, his benefits, promises, and all that is in him: That we are content with his laws, as well as his love; his precepts, as well as his promises; and his cross as well as his crown.

Q. *Have communicants a right to the cup as well as the bread?*

A. Yes certainly they have, conform to our Saviour's institution and pattern, and his apostles practice, which we have plainly recorded, Matth. xxvi, 26, 27, 28, 29. 1 Cor. xi. 24, 25. And if one of the sacramental signs were wanting, believers would not have a full representation of their Redeemer's sufferings, nor a complete feast for their nourishment and strength.

Q. *Are not Papists much to blame then, in taking the cup from the people?*

A. Moſt certainly they are; for as they do a great injury to the people, ſo they are guilty of the greateſt ſacrilege before God, and rebellion againſt his authority, who inſtituted this ſacred ordinance. For by the inſtitution, the people have as good right to the cup, as to the bread. Nay, our Saviour (as it were) foreſeeing the Papiſts encroachment in this particular, is more expreſs in his injunction concerning the cup than the bread; in theſe words, 'drink ye all of it.' Alſo their obedience to this injunction, is more expreſly recorded than with reſpect to the bread, in theſe words, 'and they all drank of it;' compare Mat. xxvi. 27. with Mark xiv. 23.

Q. *What is ſignified by the communicants eating the bread and drinking the wine?*

A. In general, it ſignifies our making cloſe and particular application by faith, of Chriſt and all his benefits unto our ſouls and their various neceſſities and exigencies, each of us ſaying of Chriſt in a believing manner, with Thomas, John xx. 28. 'My Lord and my God.' But more particularly, theſe actions of eating and drinking in the ſacrament do ſignify,

1. Our near union with Chriſt. For as, by eating and drinking, the bread and the wine enter our bodies, become ours, and turn one with us; ſo by our receiving and applying Chriſt's broken body and ſhed blood in the ſacrament by faith, Chriſt is myſtically united to us, he is made one with us, and we one with him. All that he hath, his blood, and all the purchaſe of it, his merits, graces, influences, riches, &c. all are ours.

2*dly*, They ſignify the great ſatisfaction and complacency, which the believer hath in partaking of Chriſt and his benefits. For as eating and drinking are actions very gratifying and pleaſant to the body; ſo our taſting and partaking of Chriſt's dainties in the ſacrament, is moſt pleaſant to the hungry ſoul.

3*dly*, They ſignify the ſtrength and increaſe of grace, which the believer receives by this ordinance. For as, by our eating and drinking of earthly food, our bodies are increaſed and ſtrengthened for labour; ſo by this ſpiritual food, our graces, are increaſed, and ſouls ſtrengthened, for the duties of religion.

Laſtly, Theſe ſacramental actions denote the mutual giving, and taking ſeiſing and infeftment betwixt Chriſt and the believing communicant. As by the giving and receiving earth and ſtone among men, infeftments is given and taken of a field

or heritage; ſo by the giving and receiving of bread and wine in a ſacramental way, believers get inſeſtment of Chriſt and his purchaſe as their own inheritance; and alſo Chriſt hereby takes inſeſtment of them, both ſoul and body, as his people and portion, his ſervants and ſoldiers, to obey him and fight for him all the days of their lives. Likewiſe by theſe ſacred ſymbols, he takes poſſeſſion of their ſouls and bodies as his temples, ſolemnly conſecrated to him for his ſervice and reſidence.

Q. *Why ſhould communicants divide the elements among themſelves, and give to one another?*

A. 1. That they may the more cloſely imitate the practice of Chriſt and his diſciples, in partaking of the paſſover and the Lord's ſupper, Luke xxii. 17. Mat. xxvi. 26, 27.

2dly, That they may teſtify their mutual Chriſtian love and union among themſelves, and their communion and fellowſhip one with another, 1 Cor. x. 16, 17.

Q. *What ſhould be the bodily poſture of communicants in time of receiving?*

A. It ought to be a feaſting poſture, or ſuch a table-geſture as is ordinary at feaſts in the place of the world where we live; and that is ſitting. And this we have authorized by the example of Chriſt and his apoſtles at the firſt inſtitution, Mat. xxvi. 20, 26. Luke xxii. 14. John xiv. 31. I grant indeed they ſat leaning, yet ſtill that poſture is termed a ſitting, as in the forecited texts. Beſides, that was the ordinary table-poſture then in uſe among the Jews, which clearly warrants us to uſe that poſture which is ordinary among us. This alſo is proper to ſignify that holy familiarity, which Chriſt allows his people with himſelf at this ordinance; for it is a bleſſed love-feaſt, wherein he treats his people as his friends and intimates.

Q. *But may it not be thought preſumption, or want of due reverence in ſinful men, to adventure to ſit at Chriſt's holy table?*

A. 1. It is far greater preſumption in ſinful man to think to amend or alter Chriſt's wiſe and holy inſtitution to the better; or to pretend to be wiſer, holier, or humbler than the apoſtles and primitive church who uſed this poſture; or to accuſe them of indecency and irreverence.

2dly, It is no preſumption to ſinful men to receive that honour which their Lord and Saviour puts upon them: or to uſe

that holy familiarity with him, which he allows them: for the disciples were sinful men as well as others, and yet they sat with their Lord and Master, at the first communion, and continued afterwards so to do.

Q. *Why may not the reverend and humble posture of kneeling be admitted at the Lord's table?*

A. It cannot, because of the reasons above-mentioned; for we must not be wise above what is written, or think to please God by our inventions in his worship?

2dly, It is of a Popish original, for Pope Honorious the second was the first that ordained this posture of kneeling, in the beginning of the thirteenth century; and that as a native consequence of the doctrine of transubstantiation, which had been decreed some time before, by his predecessor Pope Innocent the third. And we ought not to symbolize with Papists in their errors.

3dly, There is too much ground to suspect this practice of idolatry, or having a tendency that way. For, 1. The Papists by this posture, do professedly worship the sacramental bread, believing it to be Christ's real body; and plainly say, that if they believed not this, they would neither worship it, nor kneel in receiving it. *2dly*, Our kneeling before the elements, and that out of reverence and respect to them, in an act of worshipping God or Christ, seems to say, that we worship God or Christ in or by the use of them: now these elements being consecrated creatures, of purpose placed before us, to be an image and representation of Christ to us, it hath too great appearance of evil, to use an outward posture of adoration before them: especially seeing, this is not done in the other sacrament, viz. that of baptism.

Q. *Do not many who use this posture, profess they have no design of worshipping the bread as the Papists do, and consequently are not to be suspected of idolatry?*

A. 1. Though they have no such design, yet still they do a thing that hath a dangerous tendency, and an appearance of evil, which we are expressly commanded to shun.

2. A good intention will not excuse an idolatrous action; the Israelites pretended not to worship the golden calf, but Jehovah before it, and yet that did not excuse their sin.

Concerning the Sacramental WORDS.

Queſt. *ARE not the ſacramental elements, actions, and words to be reckoned all three together, as the outward ſenſible ſigns in this ordinance, for exhibiting, ſealing, and applying Chriſt and his benefits to worthy communicants?*

A. Yes.

Q. *Is there is any difference betwixt them?*

A. Though they all be very ſignificant and inſtructive to us in partaking, yet they ſeem to differ in this; that the ſacramental elements mainly hold forth the ſpiritual matter and ſubſtance which we partake of; the ſacramental actions ſerve as a rule or example to regulate our practice in it: and the ſacramental words point forth the doctrine, uſes, and ends of the ordinance.

Q. *What are the ſacramental words chiefly to be uſed in diſpenſing and diſtributing the elements in this ſacrament?*

A. Theſe words which Chriſt ſpoke at the firſt inſtitution.

Q. *What are the words which Chriſt ſpoke?*

A. He ſpoke ſomething concerning the bread, ſomething concerning the wine, and ſomething concerning the whole ſacrament.

Q. *What did Chriſt ſpeak with reſpect to the bread?*

A. He ſaid, 1. Something by way of command, viz. 'Take eat, this do in remembrance of me.'

2dly, Something by way of explication, viz. 'This is my 'body which is broken for you,' 1 Cor. xi. 24.

Q. *What did Chriſt ſpeak concerning the wine?*

A. He ſaid likewiſe, 1. Something by way of command, viz. 'Drink ye all of it, this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me,' Mat. xxvi. 27. 1 Cor. xi. 25.

2dly, Something by way of explication, viz. 'this cup is 'the New Teſtament in my blood, which is ſhed for many 'for the remiſſion of ſins,' Mat. xxvi. 28. Luke xxii. 20.

Q. *What ſpake Chriſt with reſpect to the whole ſacrament?*

A. He ſaid, by way of argument to enforce it, 'for as 'often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do ſhew 'forth the Lord's death till he come.' 1 Cor. xi. 26. He likewiſe added on this occaſion, 'I will not drink henceforth

'of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it 'new with you in my Father's kingdom,' Mat. xxvi. 29.

Q. *What is the import of these words concerning the bread,* Take, eat?

A. It is, as if Christ had said, receive and make use of this broken bread, as a sign and seal of my broken body, with all its benefits. As ye take the bread out of my hand, and by eating receive it into your stomachs; so accept of a Saviour as he is offered unto you, receive the atonement, approve of it, and consent to it; come up to the gracious terms on which Christ and his benefits are proposed to you, accept of his grace, and submit to his government.

Q. *What should we think upon, when we hear these words?*

A. We should think upon the infinite free love of God in giving his Son, and of Christ in giving himself to such poor wretches as we are. Yea, we should in a contemplative and believing way, think we see Christ (as it were personally) at the head of the table, making offer of himself to us in the freest manner, saying, take me and the whole purchase of my death and sufferings; take my sealed testament, and all the legacies in it; take a sealed pardon of all your sins, and a sealed right to eternal life.

Q. *In what manner are we to take Christ and his benefits in this sacrament?*

A. We are to take Christ and all the blessings of his covenant in the following manner. 1. Sincerely and honestly, without all dissimulation of hypocrisy, which is a thing most hateful to God.

2*dly*, Intirely, fully, and without exception of any thing required of you.

3*dly*, With close and particular application, saying, 'My 'Lord, and my God.'

4*thly*, With thankfulness and praise, stirring up your souls, and all that is within you to bless his holy name. Bless God for such a glorious surety, such a rich purchase, such a free covenant, and such suitable promises.

5*thly*, With humility and self-denial, reckoning yourselves unworthy of the least crumb from his table, renouncing all confidence in your preparations, humiliations, or qualifications of any sort, saying, 'In the Lord only have I righteousness and strength.'

Lastly, We ought to take Christ and his purchase in the fa-

crament with full aſſurance of faith; looking on the ſacramental bread as the Lord's ſeal and pledge of our intereſt in, and title to all the bleſſings of the covenant: and taking this bread as a ſure ſign and token from Chriſt, that his body was broken for us; believing that Chriſt and all the bleſſings of the covenant, and purchaſe of his death, are herewith given to us, as really as Chriſt gives the bread into our hands.

Q. *What is the meaning of theſe words*, this is my body broken for you?

A. The meaning is, this broken bread is my body ſpiritually and ſacramentally, or, it ſignifies and repreſents my body; and is a viſible ſign and token of my body its being broken, bruiſed and crucified; yea, crucified for you, 'O 'worthy communicant, even wounded for your tranſgreſ-'ſions, and bruiſed for your iniquities.'

Q. *Do we not partake of Chriſt's body and blood in the ſacrament, after a corporal or a carnal manner, or by the mouth of the body?*

A. No; we only do it ſpiritually by faith, which is the mouth of the ſoul.

Q. *Is not Chriſt really preſent in the ſacrament; and are not believers ſaid to be partakers of Chriſt?*

A. Though Chriſt is not bodily preſent, yet he is really and truly preſent in a ſpiritual and inviſible manner. He is preſent by his Godhead, and by his Spirit. He is preſent by his power and efficacy, communicating and applying the virtue and benefits of his death: and thus we are really made partakers of Chriſt in this ordinance. We partake of the ſun, when we have its beams of light and heat darted down upon us, altho' we have not the bulk and body of the ſun put into our hands: ſo we partake of Chriſt in the ſacrament, when we ſhare of his grace, and the bleſſed fruits of his broken body, though we do not actually eat his fleſh with our mouths.

Q. *Are not the bread and wine, by the words of conſecration tranſubſtantiate, and really turned into the body and blood of Chriſt, as the Papiſts do maintain?*

A. No; the opinion is moſt falſe and abſurd, in regard;

1. It is deſtructive of the very nature and end of a ſacrament, which is to ſignify and commemorate an abſent Chriſt; for according to this opinion he would be corporally preſent, and ſo there would be no difference betwix the ſigns and things ſignified.

2*dly*, It is alſo deſtructive of the nature of Chriſt's body; for, according to this opinion, it would not be a true human body, 'in all things like unto his brethren,' Heb. ii. 17. If it could neither be ſeen or felt, or could be contracted into the bounds of a ſmall bit of bread.

3*dly*, It is expreſly contrary to the ſcriptures, which call the elements after their conſecration, ſtill bread and wine, as formerly; Mat. xxvi. 29. 1 Cor. x. 16. yea many times over, 1 Cor. xi. 26, 27, 28. Again, the ſcriptures inform us, that when Chriſt firſt adminiſtered this ſacrament, his body was entire, and his blood in his veins; and that the ſame body afterwards went forth and ſwate blood in the garden, was crucified, buried and roſe again, appeared alive to many witneſſes, and at length really aſcended up into heaven, where he ſtill continues; and his body muſt remain there till his coming at the laſt day; and ſo, it neither was, nor can be corporally eaten in the ſacrament, Mat. xxvi. 26, 29. 1 *Cor.* xv. 4, 5, 6. Acts i. 9, 10, 11. Acts iii. 21. 1 Theſſ. iv. 16. Heb. viii. 4.

4*thly*, It is contrary to ſenſe and reaſon; for it is moſt obvious to us, that the bread and wine after conſecration are the ſame in ſubſtance what they were: we ſee, feel, taſte, and ſmell them to be real bread and wine ſtill: they retain both their quantities and qualities; they have the length, thickneſs, breadth, colour, taſte and ſmell of bread and wine. Reaſon alſo tells us that the ſame body cannot be at the ſame time both glorified in heaven, and broken and eaten upon the earth. That Chriſt's body could not be entire, living, ſitting at the table and ſpeaking with *his diſciples*; and yet at the ſame time broken, dead, lying on the table, and eaten by his diſciples; yea, and by himſelf alſo.

Beſides theſe, many other monſtrous abſurdities and contradictions do follow upon the doctrine of tranſubſtantiation.

Q. *What are the other abſurdities of this doctrine?*

A. 1. It would follow hence, that either Chriſt behoved to have many thouſand bodies, which would be monſtrous; or that the ſame one whole body of Chriſt can be in many thouſand places at the ſame time; both whereof are equally abſurd.

2*dly*, It deſtroys the teſtimony of our ſenſes in all other caſes; ſo that the being or power of God cannot be proven by the works of creation, which is contrary to the apoſtle's doc-

trine, Rom. i. 20. Nor can the truth of Chriſt's reſurrection be proven from the teſtimony of the witneſſes, or from their ſeeing, feeling and hearing, which is contrary to Luke i. 1, 2. 1 Cor. xv. 5, 6, 7. 1 John i. 1. According to this doctrine, there was no ſtrength in the argument which Chriſt uſed to prove the verity of his reſurrection, when he appealed to the ſenſes of his diſciples, bidding them 'handle him and ſee, 'behold his hands and feet, and thruſt the hand into his 'ſide,' Luke xxiv. 39, 40. John xx. 27. And this would go far to ſhake the truth of Chriſtianity itſelf, which depends on the reſurrection of Chriſt.

3*dly*, This doctrine allows a power to a ſilly maſs-prieſt, which is not granted to all the angels in heaven, viz. to make his maker and eat his god: for he worſhips what he makes, and eats what he worſhips.

4*thly*, According hereunto, Chriſt's glorious body would yet be liable to ſufferings, ſubject to corruption, and obnoxious to be eaten by wicked men, yea, by dogs, rats, mice, &c.

5*thly*, It would follow that a miniſter could give to a communicant, the thing ſignified as well as the ſigns, which is the prerogative of God alone.

6*thly*, That other figurative expreſſions in ſcripture ſhould alſo be underſtood literally; and ſo Chriſt would alſo be turned really into a door, a vine, a rock, &c. For he doth as expreſſly call himſelf by thoſe names, as he calls the bread in the ſacrament his body.

Q. *Is there no change made at all upon the elements at conſecration?*

A. Yes; but it is not a phyſical, but a moral change: it is only a change as to their uſe and ſignification. By conſecration they are ſet apart from common uſe to a ſacred and myſtical uſe. They are no more for ordinary aliment to the body, but become thereby ſigns of Chriſt, ſeals of grace, pledges of juſtification, and earneſts of ſalvation; which is not done by deſtruction of their nature, but by divine deſignation. As of common wax a valid ſeal is made to a charter, by putting an authoritative ſtamp upon it, though it be ſtill the ſame, what it was, as to its ſubſtance; ſo here the conſecrated elements ſtill retain their former nature, and are not Chriſt's real body and blood, under the accidents of bread and wine as the Papiſts moſt abſurdly aſſert,

Q. *How then can Chriſt's words be true, when he ſaith expreſsly of the bread,* This is my body.

A. Theſe words are moſt true in a ſacramental ſenſe; for Chriſt ſpeaks here in a ſacramental dialect, and retains the ſame ſtyle he had uſed formerly concerning the paſſover, Exod. xii. 11. 'It is the Lord's paſſover.' Now this cannot be meant but figuratively: for certainly the Lamb, or their eating of it, was not literally the Lord's gracious act of paſſing over the Iſraelites houſes, when he came to deſtroy the Egyptians on every ſide of them; but a ſign or token of his paſſing over them; and yet he ſays expreſly, 'It is the Lord's paſſover.' Thus alſo did he ſpeak of the other ſacrament, viz. circumciſion when he inſtituted it, Gen. xvii. 18. 'This is 'my covenant.' Now circumciſion was not literally the covenant itſelf, but only a ſign and ſeal of the covenant. Alſo in the inſtitution of the Lord's Supper, he uſeth the ſame ſort of figurative ſpeeches; and if the Papiſts will not grant this concerning the bread, when Chriſt ſaid of it, 'This is my 'body;' yet whether they will or not, they muſt own it, concerning the wine, when he ſaith, 'This cup is the New 'Teſtament.' For here is a two-fold figure; firſt, he did not mean this properly or literally of the cup or veſſel that contained the wine; for ſo the cup cannot be the New Teſtament or covenant of grace, but the wine contained in the cup. Neither, ſecondly, can the wine be properly called the New Teſtament, or covenant itſelf, but only a ſign or pledge of it. So that we ſee ſuch metonymical and figurative ſpeeches, are the ordinary ſacramental language that God in all ages hath made uſe of, in inſtituting the ſeals of his covenant. And can Papiſts give any ſolid reaſon, why ſuch ſpeeches as theſe, ſhould be taken in a figurative ſenſe in one place and not in another, when the caſe is the ſame, and the neceſſity plainly equal.

Q. *What is the meaning of Chriſt's words concerning the cup,* Drink ye all of it, and this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me?

A. He means theſe things; 1. To diſcover the freeneſs of his grace, and the ready welcome he gives to all his gueſts, even the meaneſt and pooreſt of them.

2dly, To teach us thirſtily and affectionately to receive (together with the cup) the precious blood of Chriſt, and by faith apply it to our ſouls in a particular manner, for the cur-

ing of all our diſeaſes, the waſhing away all our ſins, and the ſupply of all our wants.

3*dly*, That in the receiving and drinking of this cup, we ſhould entertain and keep up a freſh and thankful remembrance of Chriſt's ſufferings, and of his dying love in ſhedding and offering up his blood as a propitiatory ſacrifice for our ſins. We ſhould remember and think upon, both what he hath done, what he is ſtill doing, and what he is about to do for us.

Q. *Why are we ſo expreſsly charged to remember Chriſt in this ordinance? are we in any hazard of forgeting him?*

A. Yes; our Saviour knows that we have worldly hearts, treacherous memories, and ſtand in need of all theſe memorandums, to keep up the lively remembrance of his love.

Q. *What is implied in remembring of Chriſt?*

A. It hath in it, 1. The knowledge of Chriſt, and the method of redemption through his blood.

2*dly*, Some precious acquaintaince with him, by a work of grace on the heart, and cloſing with him by faith.

3*dly*, A believing contemplation of his death and ſufferings.

4*thly*, Such a remembrance as makes deep and ſuitable impreſſions on our ſouls.

Q. *What obligations lye upon us to keep up the remembrance of Chriſt?*

A. 1. Becauſe he is our moſt loving friend; a friend that remembered us in our low eſtate, and that hath done more for us than all the friends of the world could or would have done.

2*dly*, Becauſe he is an abſent friend; yea, abſent on our account, and ſtill negotiating our affairs at the court of heaven. He conſtantly remembers his people, and hath them ſtill on his heart, and in his eye.

3*dly*, Becauſe he is a friend quickly about to return. He is ſtill meditating on it, and faſt preparing for it. He is haſting to come again in the clouds to meet his people, take them home to his palace, and put them in poſſeſſion of all his purchaſe.

Q. *What kind of remembrance of Chriſt ought we to have in receiving the ſacrament?*

A. Not a bare hiſtorical remembrance, for ſo Judas, Pilate and the devils in hell, may remember how they betrayed and crucified Chriſt on earth; but it is a remembrance with ſuitable impreſſions on our ſouls.

1. We must have an awful and reverential remembrance, adoring the justice and holiness of God, displayed in the sufferings of Christ his dear son. O how vehemently did he hate sin, that he would not spare him when he cried, and was but surety for another! May not we cry with the Bethshemites, 1 Sam. vi. 20. 'Who is able to stand before this holy Lord 'God?'

2*dly*, It must be a mournful and heart-breaking remembrance looking on a slain Christ in the elements, as one pierced through and crucified by our sins; and our eye should affect our hearts with grief and sorrow for these sins that nailed and killed the Lord of life.

3*dly*, We must have a sin-loathing remembrance; abhorring with the utmost detestation, our cursed sins that made a strong and mighty Redeemer to sweat blood; and groan under their weight; yea, never parted with him till they brought him to a bitter death.

4*thly*, It must be an affectionate remembrance. The unparalleled love of Christ discovered in the sacrament, must not be thought on without love. Our hearts should even burn with affection to him, when we remember the great floods of wrath that brake in upon Christ's soul, and yet could not drown his love to us.

5*thly*, It must be a thankful remembrance, saying, O what shall I render to Christ for undertaking my deliverance, and wading through hell to save me from perishing there for ever. O if men and angels would help me to extol his free grace and wondrous love.

6*thly*, It must be a fiducial remembrance, laying the *whole* stress of our soul's justification and salvation upon the death of Christ; pleading it with God, for answering all the accusations of Satan, the indictments of the law, and challenges of our own consciences.

Q. *What is the import of these words of Christ, concerning the cup;* This cup is the New Testament in my blood, shed for many for the remission of sins?

A. It is a figurative speech, as I shewed before, and the plain literal sense of it is, the wine in this cup, as representing the shedding of my blood for your sins, is a sure sign and token to you, of God's making and confirming the New Testament, or covenant of grace with you; and of his sealing all the blessings of it unto you. Or, this cup is a visible pledge

to you of that rich covenant with its bleſſings, which is brought about and ratified to you by the ſhedding of my blood for ſin.

Q. *What are the ſweet inſtructions and meditations which theſe words of Chriſt do afford us?*

A. They are many, ſuch as theſe; 1. The covenant of grace is Chriſt's teſtament, wherein all manner of precious legacies are freely bequeathed unto his people.

2*dly*, That this teſtament is ſure, and of undoubted force, being confirmed by the death of the Teſtator, and ſealed with his blood.

3*dly*, That Chriſt puts a ſealed copy of his teſtament into every worthy communicant's hand, at the Lord's table.

4*thly*, That the covenant of grace, with all its bleſſings, is purchaſed by Jeſus Chriſt to believers, by the price of his blood.

5*thly*, That pardon of ſin is one of the choiceſt legacies in Chriſt's teſtament, and to be highly valued.

6*thly*, That without the ſhedding of blood (even the precious blood of Chriſt, which is the blood of atonement) there can be no remiſſion of ſin.

7*thly*, The blood of Chriſt cannot be effectual to any, unleſs it be received and applied by the hand of faith.

8*thly*, That in order to make a good title to covenant bleſſings it is abſolutely needful, that every man for himſelf do take hold of the covenant, as tendered in the goſpel ordinances.

9*thly*, That the news of a covenant ratified, and pardon, ſealed by the blood of Chriſt, is moſt reviving and refreſhing to the guilty ſoul; as wine that makes glad the heart.

Q. *What are the legacies and bleſſings contained in the Teſtament given, and ſealed to believers in the Lord's ſupper?*

A. There is the Holy Spirit to teach, guide, and comfort them; there is pardon of ſin, and peace with God; in a word, there is wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, redemption, grace and glory. All which, with many more, were mentioned before, among the promiſes of the covenant of grace.

Q. *How ſhall we know if we have any part in Chriſt's teſtament, or if our names be in it?*

A. By theſe two things, 1. If we do heartily take hold of it, embrace its promiſes, and acquieſce in the method of ſalvation contained in it.

2*dly*, If we can prove ourſelves to be amongſt Chriſt's poor relations, or claim any kinneſs to him by faith and regeneration

All theſe being children and heirs, have an intereſt in Chriſt's teſtament, Iſa. lvi. 4, 5. John i. 12. 2 Cor. vi. 16, 17, 18. Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26. Rom. viii. 17.

Q. *What are the marks of theſe who are children of Chriſt's family and heirs of his teſtament?*

A. They are ſuch as are begotten by the word to a lively hope, tranſplanted from nature's garden to grace, and become plants of his right hand's planting.

2*dly*, They know ſomething of the ſpirit of adoption, and his operations in their ſouls; particularly in diſcovering ſin, exciting to prayer, conquering luſts and ſanctifying the heart, Rom. viii. 15. Gal. iv. 6. Eph. iv. 23, 24.

3*dly*, They have children's frames and diſpoſitions of heart, viz. a filial fear, and reverence of God, a filial love and affection to Chriſt, and a deep hatred of every thing that is offenſive or diſhonourable to him. Alſo they have a great concern for their mother the church; and a love to their brethren the ſaints. They love their Father's preſence, and deſire to be much about his hand, Mal. i. 6. John viii. 42. Pſal. cxix. 136. Pſal. cxxxvii. 6.

4*thly*, They have children's appetites for their food: they earneſtly deſire the ordinances, and communion with Chriſt in them, Pſal. lxxxiv. 1. 1 Pet. ii. 2.

Q. *How are we aſſured that Chriſt's teſtament is firm and unalterable?*

A. From theſe three things; 1. The faithfulneſs and immutability of the teſtator, Heb. x. 23. Heb. xiii. 8. Rev. i. 5.

2*dly*, It is become of unalterable force by the Teſtator's death, and is confirmed by his blood, Heb. ix. 16, 17. Mat. xxvi. 28.

3*dly*, He hath appended the two great ſeals of heaven to it, baptiſm and the Lord's ſupper, of purpoſe to declare the validity and fulneſs of his teſtament.

Q. *But how are we certain that this teſtament will be duly execute, conform to the Teſtator's will?*

A. Becauſe, 1. He hath left it in a ſure and faithful hand, even that of the Holy Spirit, who is the executor thereof, to apply it, and beſtow the legacies it bequeaths, upon theſe who are named in it, John xiv. 16, 26.

Yea, 2*dly*, The bleſſed Teſtator is riſen from the dead,

and lives for ever, to see the execution of his own testament himself, Rev. i. 18. Heb. vii. 25.

Q. *When will all these legacies be bestowed on the heirs of this testament? is it just now?*

A. They are just now infeft, and vested therein, by the word and sacraments; whereby their right is sufficiently secured to the great estate, which Christ hath left them by his latter-will. And in the mean time, they have out of it a sufficient maintenance, to continue till the time appointed come, when they shall enter into the full possession of the whole. Believers while here, are but minors, and not fit to be entrusted with the management of their estate, so that it is secured for them in good hands, till they arrive at full age.

Q. *What is the meaning of the words which Christ spoke with respect to the whole sacrament;* for as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew forth the Lord's death till he come?

A. It is, as if he had said, see that ye make conscience of coming to this holy table, and of coming frequently; for every time you do it in a right manner, you keep up the memorial of your Lord and Saviour's death, in a way that is pleasant to him; seeing he hath appointed this as a standing ordinance in the church, to continue till his coming to judgment; when he will call his whole servants to account concerning their observing his injunctions, and this among the rest.

Q. *What obligations lye upon us to come and partake of this ordinance?*

A. All the professors of Christ are obliged to it on many accounts; 1. In point of duty. 2. In point of interest. 3. In point of gratitude. 4. In point of safety.

Q. *How are we obliged in point of duty?*

A. Because Christ our Lord and law-giver hath peremptorily commanded it: nay, for the more security, he repeats the command twice, 1 Cor. xi. 24, 25. 'This do ye, this 'do ye;' and surely all of us owe obedience to his authority, without reserve.

Q. *How are we obliged to partake in point of interest?*

A. Because of the great advantages which are to be got by it, seeing Christ and all the benefits of the new covenant are here sealed and applied.

Q. *How are we obliged to partake in point of gratitude?*

A. 1. Because the command enjoining this duty, was

among the laſt words of our dying friend and Saviour, who did more for us than all the world could have done.

2dly, Becauſe the deſign of the ordinance is to keep up the memorial of the love, which our dying Saviour expreſſed at the inſtitution of it, in ſuffering death, and offering up himſelf a ſacrifice to divine juſtice in our ſtead.

3dly, Becauſe he ſeeks no greater return for his love than a thankful remembrance of it.

4thly, Becauſe he puts us to no greater charge to expreſs it, than by eating and drinking at his table.

Q. *How are we obliged to partake in point of ſafety?*

A. Becauſe the ſlighting or wilful neglecting of this ordinance, is a great ſin before God, and very provoking to him, as well as dangerous to ourſelves.

Q. *Wherein lyes the ſin of neglecting this ordinance?*

A. In reſpect it is no leſs than contempt of the words of our dying Saviour, diſobedience to his command, ingratitude to our greateſt benefactor, a baſe ſlighting of God's love, Chriſt's ſufferings, and all the great preparations he hath made for us; a wronging of our own ſouls, and deſpiſing of our choiceſt mercies and privileges.

Q. *What is the danger of neglecting this duty?*

A. It draws on the wrath and vengeance of God, nay, of Chriſt the Mediator; which muſt be very terrible. As God threatened to cut off theſe that neglected the paſſover of old, ſo he threatened ſevere wrath againſt theſe, who ſhould neglect the goſpel feaſts, Num. ix. 13. Zech. xiv. 16, 17, 18. And theſe threatenings are renewed, Matth. xxii. 7. Luke xiv. 24.

Q. *Is it a good excuſe for neglecting this ordinance, for people to ſay, they are not prepared, have quarrels with their neighbours, or cannot get ſuch particular ſins left?*

A. No; for the want of preparation is our ſin, and one ſin can never excuſe or anſwer for another. It is a fearful thing to live in a ſinful courſe againſt light, and then to make ſin an excuſe for the neglect of commanded duty.

Q. *Is it not enough that we partake of the Lord's ſupper once in our lives, as we do of the other ſacrament, baptiſm?*

A. No; for baptiſm being the ſacrament of initiation, is not to be repeated; but the Lord's ſupper being for nutrition, is often to be received.

Q. *What obligations lye on us to partake often?*

A. We are obliged to it: 1. By our Saviour's words at the firſt inſtitution, 1 Cor. xi. 25, 26. 'As often as ye do 'this;' which have the virtue of a command to frequency in communicating.

2*dly*, By the example of the apoſtles and primitive Chriſtians, whoſe practice it was to communicate frequently, nay, for ordinary, every Lord's day, Acts ii. 42, 46. Acts xx. 7.

3*dly*, Our ſouls neceſſities do call for frequency in partaking; for we are oft ready to forget Chriſt, and therefore we oft need this ordinance to bring him to our remembrance. We are oft ſubject to ſpiritual deadneſs, weakneſs of faith, and decays of grace; and therefore have frequent need of this ordinance, for ſtrength and quickening.

Q. *Are we as much obliged to frequent communicating, as the apoſtles and primitive Chriſtians were?*

A. Though they were in a much better frame for it, as having had more recent and warm impreſſions of the love and death of their Redeemer conſtantly upon their ſpirits, than we have; yet certainly we are under as ſtrong obligations to frequent partaking, as the firſt Chriſtians were. For we have the ſame Lord and Saviour that they had, and are under the ſame obligations of love and gratitude to him. We have the ſame need of the application of Chriſt's blood, and a confirmed intereſt in his meritorious death that they had; and conſequently the ſame need of this memorial-feaſt and ſealing ordinance.

Q. *Is not frequency apt to breed formality in this duty?*

A. 1. The ſame thing may be alledged with reſpect to other duties, which yet is no good argument for the unfrequent practice of them.

2*dly*, This fault is no ways chargeable upon the holy ordinance and inſtitution of Chriſt, but upon the corruption and careleſſneſs of our hearts; which we ought diligently to watch and ſtrive againſt; endeavouring in Chriſt's ſtrength, as often as we partake, ſo often to prepare for it, with all due care and ſolemnity.

Q. *What is meant by ſhewing forth the Lord's death in the ſacrament, which ſeems to be laid down as our main buſineſs in this ordinance?*

A. We may be ſaid to repreſent, ſhew forth and annunciate the death of Chriſt in the ſacrament, three ways: 1. With

reſpect to ourſelves. *2dly*, With reſpect to the world. *3dly*, With reſpect to God.

Q. *How are we to ſhew forth the death of Chriſt with reſpect to ourſelves?*

A. As the external elements and ſigns, in the Lord's ſupper, do give a plain repreſentation of the death and ſufferings of Chriſt to the eye of the body; ſo in partaking of theſe elements, we ought to ſet the things repreſented by them (viz. The death of Chriſt, with the matchleſs love he therein expreſſed) before the eyes of our minds and underſtandings, in order to beget a freſh remembrance of that dying love, and to raiſe our faith and hope in a crucified Saviour.

Q. *How are we to ſhew forth Chriſt's death in the ſacrament with reſpect to the world?*

A. By owning hereby, in the moſt public manner, that we are the diſciples of a crucified Jeſus; not aſhamed of our maſter, or his ignominious death, but declaring before all that we glory in him, and rely upon the merits of his death here ſhewed forth, as the only hope of our ſalvation; and that we have no Saviour beſides him.

Q. *How are we to ſhew forth Chriſt's death in the ſacrament with reſpect to God?*

A. Two ways; 1. We are to ſhew it forth to a loving and merciful God in a way of thankſgiving and praiſe; aſcribing all glory to him for ſuch a noble ranſom and ſacrifice, as he hath found out and provided for us.

2dly, We are alſo to ſhew forth Chriſt's death in the ſacrament to a juſt and ſin-revenging God, in a way of faith and prayer; pleading this ſacrifice with God, as a ſkreen and defence againſt the ſword of juſtice, and curſe of the law; and preſenting it as the ground of all our hopes and expectations.

Q. *Is the Lord's ſupper to be reckoned a ſacrifice to God; as the Papiſts have turned it in their maſs, into a proper atoning ſacrifice for the ſins both of the dead and living?*

A. Not at all; for that is nothing but an abominable corruption of this bleſſed ordinance. For though the Lord's ſupper be a repreſentation and memorial of the ſacrifice of Chriſt's death and ſufferings, which he offered to God upon the croſs for our ſins; and in partaking thereof, we may by faith plead this ſacrifice with God: yet the ſacramental bread and wine are no ſuch ſacrifice to God themſelves; but only a ſign and ſeal thereof, given by God to us for ſtrengthening our

faith in his mercy promiſed unto us through Chriſt's death.

Q. *What are the abſurdities of the Papiſts doctrine and practice in this matter?*

A. 1. The Popiſh maſs-prieſts do uſurp Chriſt's prieſthood and office, pretending really to offer up Chriſt a ſacrifice to God, which none but himſelf could do.

2*dly*, This highly reflects upon the perfection of Chriſt's ſacrifice, that he once offered up on the croſs; which we are aſſured by the word of God, was acceptable to God, perfect, and never needing to be again repeated, Heb. ix. 25, 26, 27, 28. Heb. x. 12, 14.

3*dly*, This is bottomed on their abſurd doctrine of tranſubſtantiation, which teacheth that the bread in the ſacrament, is turned into Chriſt's real and true body, which is moſt falſe; as I proved before.

Q. *What is the import of ſhewing forth the Lord's death till he come?*

A. Till he come, imports, 1. That this ſacrament is to endure till Chriſt's ſecond coming, and no longer.

2*dly*, That in communicating, we ſhould have the lively faith of Chriſt's coming at the great day to judge of our ſincerity and faithfulneſs in covenanting with him; as alſo to fulfil all his promiſes to worthy communicants.

3*dly*, That communicants ſhould always live in the hope and expectation of the coming of Chriſt, and of everlaſting glory, Tit. ii. 13. Jude 21.

Q. *Why cannot the ſacrament continue after Chriſt's coming?*

A. Becauſe in heaven there is no need of ſacraments. Here we hold communion with Chriſt by ſigns and ſymbols, in regard of our darkneſs, diſtance and imperfection; but above, believers will ſee him as he is, and enjoy him perfectly. Faith ſhall be turned into viſion, and hope into fruition. The day then 'will break, and all the ſhadows will flee away,' Cant. ii. 17. Rev. xxi. 22, 23.

Q. *What is the meaning of theſe words of Chriſt at the firſt inſtitution*, henceforth I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until that day, when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom?

A. Chriſt deſigns hereby to teach his diſciples ſeveral things; 1. That now he was taking his leave of ſacraments

and ordinances here below; and that there is no uſe for ſuch above.

2dly, That the Lord's ſupper here, is an emblem of the marriage-ſupper of the Lamb hereafter: Or, a repreſentation of that heavenly communion above, which the ſaints for ever will partake of with the Lord Jeſus, which is held forth by the pleaſures of a banquet of wine.

3dly, That the pleaſures of that communion, which they ſhould entertain with him in heaven, will never wax old, but always continue freſh and new.

4thly, That in this world, they were no more to have communion with him in his bodily preſence, as they had formerly enjoyed; but they muſt henceforth feed on him by faith, till their happy meeting together in heaven: where faith will be ſwallowed up in viſion.

5thly, That notwithſtanding of the want of his bodily preſence, they ſhould ſtill keep up communion with him in the uſe of this ordinance, patiently waiting and looking for the full accompliſhment of it, in that glorious eternal feaſt above.

Q. *Is there not a great difference betwixt the communion here, and the communion above? or betwixt our drinking the fruit of the vine here, and our drinking it new with Chriſt in his Father's kingdom?*

A. Yes; the odds are very great: For, 1. The communion, which Chriſt allows his people here, is but the foretaſte or firſt-fruits of the promiſed land, given to wean their hearts from this world, and ſharpen their appetites and deſires after the Canaan above, where theſe firſt-fruits do grow and are fully ripe.

2dly, The comforts of the lower table are but ſmall, and of ſhort continuance for ordinary: but theſe of the higher table are full, ſatisfying and everlaſting.

3dly, Here we feed on an abſent Chriſt by ſigns and ſymbols, and have but bad appetites for our food: but the communicants above will enjoy Chriſt's bodily preſence, ſee him as he is, and have vaſt and never-failing appetites for that heavenly feaſt.

4thly, Here communicants meet in parcels, and in ſundry places: but above, the church of the firſt-born ſhall meet together in one general aſſembly; and be all ſet together with Chriſt, as it were at one table.

5thly, Here many traitors and unworthy communicants do

thruſt themſelves in among the children, and many things happen to mar the children's comfort: but above, no Judas or unfurniſhed gueſt can come, nor any thing fall out to impair the glory of that feaſt.

6*thly*, The lower table is placed in temples made with hands, with earthly men attending; but hereafter the glorious heavens will be the rooms, and the heavenly hoſts the attendants.

7*thly*, Here the communicants are entertained with the ſinging of pſalms: but above there will be the multitude of the heavenly hoſt, ſinging 'hallelujahs to the Lamb that ſits 'upon the throne, and glory to God in the higheſt.'

Q. *What are the great ends and uſes of the Lord's ſupper?*

A. 1. To keep up the ſolemn and lively remembrance of Chriſt's death, and dying love to loſt ſinners among men, while the world ſtands.

2*dly*, Solemnly to make over, apply, and ſeal Chriſt, his purchaſe, and all the benefits of the new covenant unto true believers.

3*dly*, That hereby we may have occaſion to make public profeſſion of our owning and receiving a crucified Jeſus, as our only Saviour and Maſter.

4*thly*, That we may teſtify our thankfulneſs to God, for giving his Son to die for our redemption; and to the Son for laying down his life ſo willingly for us.

5*thly*, That we might get a pledge and ſeal of our union and communion with Chriſt, and our faith in his promiſes ſtrengthened and confirmed.

6*thly*, That we may renew and ſeal our covenant with God in Chriſt, perſonally ratify our baptiſmal vows, and ſolemnly bind ourſelves to take God for our God, and give up ourſelves to be the Lord's people, and to walk with him in the ways of goſpel obedience.

7*thly*, It is appointed as a ſign and bond of believers union and communion among themſelves; their mutual love to and fellowſhip one with another.

Laſtly, It is deſigned as a ſpiritual meal, for ſtrengthening of the Lord's people in the inward man, for nouriſhing their graces, cheering their hearts, removing their fears and faintings, and giving them a pledge of heaven, and a foretaſte of the eternal communion above. For all which, ſee Matt.

xxvi. 26, 27. 1 Cor. xi. 20, 25, 35, 36. Gal. iii. 1. 1 Cor. x. 16, 17. Heb. ix. 15, 16, 17.

Q. *Is it not to be fear'd that many have not right ends in coming to the Lord's ſupper?*

A. There is too much ground for it; and people's ends are ſurely wrong. 1. When they come to the Lord's table to make atonement for their ſins, or purchaſe and enſure heaven to them; as ſome ignorant perſons think they do by this action.

2*dly*, When they come, thinking hereby to hide or cloak ſome ſin or wicked practice, they are preſently living in.

3*dly*, When they come only to comply with the cuſtom and faſhion of the places where they live, or to prevent people's having bad thoughts of them, or ſome worldly inconveniences to themſelves.

4*thly*, When they come to pleaſe miniſters and friends, or to gain applauſe and a good name in the world.

5*thly*, When they come in order to qualify or put themſelves in a capacity for obtaining or keeping lucrative poſts or places of preferment in the world.

6*thly*, When people come to this ordinance, thinking to be converted by it, and brought into Chriſt.

Q. *May not people be converted by this ſacrament?*

A. This is not a converting, but a confirming ordinance in its own nature, which doth ſuppoſe that theſe who come to it, are converted, and in Chriſt before. Yet we muſt own that this ordinance hath been the occaſion of converting many thouſands, by reaſon of the word preached or dropt at the diſpenſing of it, which God hath ſignally bleſſed to them. But though ſovereign grace may do ſo, this is no warrant for unconverted perſons to come and partake of this holy feaſt, which the Maker of it hath not inſtituted for them, but for his people.

Q. *To whom is the Lord's ſupper to be adminiſtred?*

A. Only to theſe who have a goſpel-right to it, and goſpel-preparation for it.

Q. *Who are theſe who have a goſpel-right to this ordinance?*

A. There is a two-fold goſpel-right; 1. An external right with reſpect to the church. 2. An internal right with reſpect to God.

Q. *Who have an external right with reſpect to the church?*

A. Theſe who being baptized, have a competent meaſure of Chriſtian knowledge, profeſs their faith in Chriſt, and live

religious and blameleſs lives before men. Theſe have ſo far a right to this table in the ſight of men, that they cannot be juſtly debarred from it by the office-bearers of Chriſt's houſe, Acts viii. 36, 37, 38. Phil. i. 27.

Q. *Who are theſe that have not this right, and are to be kept back from this holy table?*

A. All who are groſsly ignorant, or openly prophane.

Q. *Who are to be reckoned groſsly ignorant?*

A. All theſe who know not God in his nature, perſons and attributes; who know not their miſery by nature and the way of their recovery by Chriſt; who know not the nature of regeneration or converſion; nor the ends and uſes of the Lord's ſupper.

Q. *Why ſhould ſuch ignorant perſons be kept back from this ordinance?*

A. Becauſe they are not capable to examine themſelves in order to prepare for coming, nor rightly to diſcern the Lord's body in the ſacrament when they do come; and ſo they would provoke God, and get no benefit by their coming, but much hurt, 1 Cor. xi. 28, 29. 1 Tim. v. 22.

Q. *Who are to be reckoned openly prophane?*

A. All ſuch as live in the open and known commiſſion of ſin, and omiſſion of duty, without repentance, or ſerious reſolution to reform their lives.

Q. *Why are ſuch to be kept back?*

A. Becauſe ſuch do but mock God, when they pretend to ſeal a covenant with him: they diſhonour God and prophane the ordinance, when with unholy hands, they preſume to meddle with ſuch holy things; yea, they contract the guilt of Chriſt's blood, and 'eat and drink judgment to themſelves,' 1 Cor. xi. 27, 29. Mat. vii. 6. Num. ix. 6, 11.

Q. *Are all theſe who have knowledge in their heads, or morality in their lives, to be thought worthy communicants?*

A. Though ſuch have a right to this ordinance before men; yet many ſuch may want grace in their hearts, and ſo have no right before God; and conſequently unworthy communicants.

Q. *Who are theſe who have an internal and true right to the Lord's table in the ſight of God?*

A. All ſuch who are truly in covenant with God; believe in Chriſt with their hearts, obey them in their lives, and make ſuitable preparation for this holy ordinance.

Q. *Doth not God call and invite all the profeſſors of Chriſt to come to his table, and conſequently have they not all a right?*

A. Very true, all profeſſors, nay, the greateſt ſinners, are called to come; but ſurely God doth not call them to come to his table in their ſins, but to come in the due order, firſt to quit their ſins, cloſe with Chriſt, and then to come to his table: we are firſt to prepare, and then come. And though many unprepared perſons may have allowance from men, who know not their hearts or ſecret actions; yet, none but the prepared (notwithſtanding of the general call) have God's allowance to come to his table, or can expect benefit or welcome from him, Iſa. lv. 7. Mat. xxii. 11, 12.

Q. *Why have none God's allowance and welcome to his table, but believers in Chriſt?*

A. Becauſe this is a ſeal of God's covenant with his people, which ſuppoſeth that it ſhould be made, and conſented to on our part before-hand, otherwiſe we annex the great ſeal of heaven to a blank; which is a mocking of God. So that this ordinance is inſtituted to confirm believers who are in the covenant, and not to convert unbelievers, and conſequently none but believers have a right before God.

Q. *Are all believers ſtill welcome gueſts to his table: or can they never be guilty of unworthy communicating?*

A. There is more requiſite to worthy communicating, than being in a good ſtate; we muſt alſo be in a good frame; there muſt not only be faith in the habit, but faith in the lively acts. So that if a believer neglect to examine himſelf, fail in his preparation, or want grace in exerciſe, he even communicates unworthily: yet neither this, nor any other of his ſins, will bring him into condemnation, though it brings on chaſtiſement, 1 Cor. xi. 28, 30, 31, 32. Mat. xxv. 5. Rom. viii 1. Pſal. lxxxix. 32.

Q. *What is it to communicate unworthily?*

A. It is for a man to partake in an unworthy ſtate, an unſuitable frame, or with wrong ends. Or, more particularly, it is for a perſon to approach ignorantly, without ſuitable knowledge: or, to approach formally, without a ſuitable reverence and awe of God; or to come without due preparation, without the exerciſe of faith, love, repentance, ſpiritual hunger, thankfulneſs to God, covenanting with him, and reſolutions againſt ſin. Or, to come entertaining ſome known ſin in the life, whether of omiſſion or commiſſion, or harbour-

ing ſome ſecret luſt in the heart, ſuch as pride, malice, or revenge.

Q. *Is not unworthy communicating both highly ſinful and dangerous?*

A. Yes; for 1. The ſin of it is no leſs than murdering the Son of God, and being acceſſary to the guilt of ſhedding his innocent blood. 2. The danger of it is both temporal ſtrokes and eternal damnation: for this heinous ſin, God is provoked to throw the bodies of many into the grave, and the ſouls of many into hell, 1 Cor. xi. 27, 29, 30.

Q. *Why ſhould this ſin be reckoned ſo very heinous?*

A. For theſe reaſons; 1. It argues a low eſteem and an undervaluing of Chriſt, his precious blood, and redeeming love.

2*dly*, It is a ſolemn affront to Chriſt; as it is to a king, to throw his picture or great ſeal into a puddle.

3*dly*, It is a horrid mocking of Chriſt, as it is a pretence of love to him, and hatred of ſin, while in the mean time ſin is hugged, and Chriſt deſpiſed.

4*thly*, It is a plain acceſſion to the guilt of the Jews and Romans, who embrued their hands in Chriſt's blood; for he is reckoned acceſſary to a murder who conſents to it, aids or abets the murderers, and this unworthy communicants are guilty of.

Q. *Is not the guilt of unworthy communicants in ſome reſpect more heinous than that of the Jews?*

A. Yes; for the Jews when they pierced him and ſhed his blood, they did it ignorantly, they did it to one they reckoned a criminal and blaſphemer, they did it to him when he was in the form of a ſervant, in a ſtate of humiliation. But unworthy communicants do this wittingly againſt him, they own him to be their innocent Saviour, now glorioufly exalted at the right hand of God; and at a time when he is diſplaying his love and making a rich feaſt to them; which makes the crime horrid and monſtrous. Which conſideration ſhould make us all tremble, and cry with David, Pſal. li. 14. 'Deliver me from blood-guiltineſs, O God.'

Q. *Who are thoſe that may be reckoned worthy communicants?*

A. Theſe who are in a worthy ſtate, viz. a ſtate of grace; and who have a worthy frame of ſpirit, viz. the lively exerciſe of grace; and who have worthy ends and deſigns, viz.

to ſhew forth Chriſt's death, and renew covenant with God.

Q. *Are there any worthy communicants in a legal ſenſe?*

A. No; for the beſt ſaint hath no worth or merit before God; he hath nothing in himſelf to found his claim or plea for any of theſe good things which God beſtows in the ſacrament. There are ſtill many ſins and imperfections in the beſt, ſo that after we have done all, we muſt acknowledge ourſelves to be moſt unworthy and 'unprofitable ſervants,' Gen. xxxii. 10. Luke xvii. 10.

Q. *What is meant then by the worthineſs which ſome communicants are ſaid to have?*

A. Nothing, but a goſpel ſuitableneſs and meetneſs of our ſouls ſtate and frame, to this holy ordinance; for worthineſs is oft taken in this ſenſe in ſcripture, Mat. xxii. 8. Luke iii. 8. Col. i. 10. Rev. iii. 4.

Q. *Is perfect holineſs, a ſtrong faith, or a very great meaſure of knowledge in religion, or ſenſible joy and comfort at the Lord's table, eſſentially neceſſary to worthy communicating?*

A. No; for they may be worthy communicants in a goſpel ſenſe, graciouſly owned and accepted of God, who yet may have many ſins and doubts, much darkneſs and confuſion: but where there is any meaſure of true faith in Chriſt, though weak, the Lord marks not iniquity, but looks on the ſoul as white, through the imputed righteouſneſs of Chriſt, Numb. xxiii. 21. Pſal. cxxx. 3, 4.

Q. *What is it then to communicate worthily? And wherein lyes the nature of this work and duty?*

A. It is a complex act, and a very great work. And it lyes ſhortly in our receiving Chriſt and his benefits with the hand of faith, and making particular application of them for our ſouls neceſſities; as we receive the elements with our bodily hand, and make uſe of them for our bodies. Or, it is, to caſt our guilty ſouls into the open arms of a crucified Saviour for mercy, and, in the mean time, to embrace and claſp about this bleeding high prieſt, with the arms of faith, as our Saviour and Lord, ſaying with Thomas, 'my Lord, and my 'God.' It is a flying into his wounds for ſhelter, and applying his blood for pardon and cleanſing. It is a taking Chriſt's body and blood to ſave us, and a giving up our ſouls and bodies to be ſaved, taught and ruled by him. Or in a word to communicate worthily, is ſo eat and drink at Chriſt's table, with a believing and thankful remembrance of his dying

love, reſting on his merits, mourning for ſin that pierced him, and ſolemnly reſolving to pierce him no more.

Q. *What are the advantages of worthy communicating?*

A. They are very many, and very great: hereby Chriſt and his benefits are received, the ſouls diſeaſes and plagues are cured, our ſins and luſts weakened and killed, and our graces ſtrengthned and increaſed. Hereby the hard heart is ſoftned, and the cold heart inflamed, the dead ſoul quickned, the palſy hand cured, and feeble knees ſtrengthned. Hereby the ſtraitned ſoul is enlarged, the wandering heart fixed, the creeping deſires elevated, the fainting heart ſupported, the cloudy mind brightened, the uneaſy conſcience ſatisfied, and doubting ſouls reſolved. Many times hath Chriſt made himſelf known to his diſciples in 'the breaking of bread,' herein he hath allowed them the ſmiles of his face, the comforts of his Spirit, and ſeal of their pardon, and a ſight of the king in his beauty, and a Piſgah-view of Canaan. O worthy communicant, is there any meal in the world ſo profitable as this? A meal that proves life to your ſouls, and death to your ſins, a cordial to your hearts, and balm to your wounds, ſtrength to your graces, and poiſon to your luſts.

Q. *What are the diſadvantages of unworthy communicating?*

A. It draws down judicial ſtrokes from God upon the ſoul, diſeaſes and untimely death on the body, and eternal wrath upon both. It brings on deſertion from God, and the rebukes of his anger, darkneſs on the mind, deadneſs and impenitency on the heart, barrenneſs and leanneſs on the ſoul, decay and withering on the graces, formality and lifeleſſneſs in duties, fearedneſs, and ſometimes horror on the conſcience: yea, it lets looſe Satan againſt the ſoul. And ſome of theſe plagues have even believers themſelves ſmarted under, for their careleſs communicating, 1 Cor. xi. 29, 30.

Q. *What is the meaning of theſe words,* 1 Cor. xi. 29. He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himſelf, not diſcerning the Lord's body? *Is this ſin ſo damnable that there is no pardon for it?*

A. Tho' the ſin be heinous, yet it is not unpardonable: that is not the meaning of the words: the word damnation, in the original is *krima*, which properly ſignifies judgment, as well as damnation, and therefore our Aſſembly Divines uſe this word upon this ſubject, 'They eat and drink judgment

'to themſelves,' i. e. they make themſelves liable to temporal, ſpiritual, and eternal judgments: temporal and ſpiritual judgments will follow them in this world, and without a timely repentance, theſe will end in eternal damnation in the other. This is pardonable, as well as others, through 'the blood of Chriſt which cleanſeth from all ſin.' For as the virtue of this precious blood ſaved and cleanſed many, who actually ſhed it at Jeruſalem; ſo it can ſave and cleanſe theſe who ſpill and trample it under foot in the ſacrament, upon their application to it, Luke xxiv. 46, 47. Acts ii. 36, 38, 41. 1 John i. 7.

Q. *Doth the preſence of a wicked man pollute the ſacrament to worthy receivers who ſit at the table with him?*

A. No; for it is ſaid, 'he eateth and drinketh judgment 'to himſelf' only, not to another that receives with him: otherwiſe Chriſt and his apoſtles had been defiled by the company of Judas; for at the ſacrament of the paſſover he certainly was.

Q. *Why is the guilt of this damning ſin, laid upon the unworthy communicant's* not diſcerning the Lord's body?

A. Becauſe he doth not diſtinguiſh betwixt common bread and the ſacrament bread, which repreſents the Lord's body; but uſeth it with as little preparation and regard, or as careleſsly, as he uſeth the other; which infers dreadful guilt before God.

Q. *Where is this ſacrament to be adminiſtred?*

A. Only in the congregations and aſſemblies of God's people. For, 1. Chriſt gave it to his diſciples when met together, and not to any of them apart, Mat. xxvi. 20, 26.

2*dly*, It was the practice of the primitive and apoſtolical churches to adminiſtrate and partake of this ſacrament publicly, when the congregation or church was aſſembled together in one place; which is ratified by the apoſtle, 1 Cor. xi. 20.

3*dly*, Becauſe it is one great deſign in this ordinance to teſtify the union or communion of Chriſtians one with another, 1 Cor. x. 16, 17. 'For we being many are one 'bread.' Now this union of many cannot be expreſſed where there are not many convened together to do it.

Q. *Wherefore may not the ſacrament be adminiſtred to the ſick, or perſons on a death-bed?*

A. It ought not, becauſe of the aforeſaid reaſons; and alſo

in regard of these following, 1. We have neither precept nor example for this practice in the word of God; and so it cannot be done in faith, Rom. xiv. 23.

2dly, It derogates much from the awfulness and solemnity of this great and august ordinance, to administrate it so privately, and with so little deliberation and preparation, as often it is done, where this practice is allowed.

3dly, Few sick or dying persons are privileged with such stayedness of mind, calmness of thought, free exercise of reason, and undisturbed use of the faculties, as is necessary for a man's examining himself before he partake, and so exerting the several acts of faith, and the other graces which are requisite in partaking. And to administrate the sacrament to these who are tossed with sickness, distracted with pain, or incapable of any freedom or distinctness of thought (as most sick people are) is to profane the ordinance, and to do the sick person more harm than good.

4thly, This were to symbolize with Papists and idolaters in their superstitious practices, and to homologate their errors; for Papists believe that the sacraments do of themselves confer grace, and that all is well, if they at last partake of this sacrament. From all which errors, idolatries and superstitious customs, we ought to keep a due distance in obedience to God's command, Exod xxiii. 24. Lev. xviii. 3. Deut. xii. 30. 1 Cor. x. 6. Rev. xviii. 4.

Q. *Seeing it is our indispensible duty to communicate, and that frequently; and it is so highly dangerous to communicate unworthily; what course shall we take, in order to our being worthy communicants?*

A. We must with all earnestness seek after that gospel fitness and preparation, which God requires of these that approach to this holy ordinance.

Concerning our PREPARATION for the LORD'S SUPPER.

Quest. *WHAT sort of preparation is it, that God requires of such as come to his table?*

A. It is not a slack or careless preparation to be put by in a hasty and superficial manner, as some do, who never

about it till the Saturday or Lord's day morning before they communicate. No, it must be timeous and deliberate, conscientious and impartial, diligent and fervent in the use of all appointed means, depending upon God for the gracious preparation of the heart, according to his promise, Psal. x. 17. Prov. xvi. 1.

Q. *What is the necessity of such solemn preparation for the Lord's table?*

A. For these reasons; 1. God requires it, 1 Cor. xi. 28.

2dly, There was also a great preparation required for the passover, Exod. xii. Numb. ix. And this was not put by in a short time; for the trumpet was blown in Jerusalem to make intimation of its approach fifteen days before; and every family was to have the lamb in their houses four days before the eating of it, Psal. lxxxi. 3. Exod. xii. 3, 6. Also the house was to be prepared and narrowly searched for leaven, and that with candles; Christ before eating it, caused bespeak and make ready an upper-room furnished, swept and garnished for that purpose: all this serves to teach us, what preparation we should make for the Lord's supper, that now is come in room of the passover.

3dly, The soul makes a near approach to an infinitely holy God in this ordinance; yea, transacts and renews covenant with him, which doth call for our making solemn preparation, as it was the saints practice of old on such occasions, Gen. xxxv. 2, 3. Josh. iii. 5. 1 Sam. vii. 3. 1 Sam. xvi. 5. Psal. xxvi. 6.

4thly, There is need for it, because we are naturally unfit and unprepared; we have carnal hearts, dead affections, and unholy souls; and therefore they must be renewed, quickened, and purified, before we can hold communion with a holy God at his table.

5thly, God makes great preparations for us in this ordinance, he hath made all things ready on his part: a rich feast, a complete Saviour, a full covenant, a sufficient ransom, a perfect righteousness, suitable promises, sovereign remedies, a glorious purchase, and everlasting inheritance. And are not we bound in duty and gratitude to prepare for receiving these great things, Prov. ix. 2. Mat. xxii. 4.

6thly, There is great danger in coming unpreparedly, even of eating and drinking damnation: of which I have spoken before. We must not think that we can escape the eye of a

jealous and all-seeing God at this feast; for he narrowly v all the guests, and will spy out every unprepared comm cant, as he did the man that wanted the wedding-gar Matth. xxii. 11. about whom he gave most fearful or v. 13.

Q. *What are the parts of preparation required of us i der to our approach to God's table?*

A. There are generally two, but very comprehensive, self-examination and exciting of the graces.

Q. *What is the nature of this work of self-examination?*

A. It lyes in a free communing with our own hearts, bringing our souls before the tribunal of conscience, and judging them according to God's word. And in this pro there must be an awakening summons given and impartia quiry made, plain accusations tabled against us, and a sentence pronounced upon us, concerning our state. A the sentence be bad, there must be the poor pannel's ea cries for mercy, and a fleeing quickly to our surety fo pealing of the sentence of the law. All this I include in examination, as necessary for preparing us to come to Lord's table.

Q. *Is there an absolute necessity for self-examination communicating?*

A. Yes, 1. Because without it, we cannot know how with us as to our state, and whether we have a right t proach or not. 2*dly*, Without it, we cannot know our and miseries; see our need of Christ, or esteem him prec 3*dly*, Without it, we cannot have a full discovery of our and so cannot reform from them. 4*thly*, Without it we not know the deficiency or weakness of the sacramental g in us, and so cannot excite them. 5*thly*, Without a par lar knowledge of our plagues and distempers, we cannot particular application of the remedy provided for us i sacrament.

Q. *What are the properties of this duty?*

A. 1. It is absolutely necessary: for it is the first st our conversion.

2*dly*, It is a duty much neglected by the most part world, they have no acquaintance with themselves.

3*dly*, It is very difficult and displeasing to nature. V most unwilling to turn accusers of ourselves; it being self-love, which always inclines us to flatter ourselves.

4thly, It is a duty we ſoon tire of, and are ready to ſhrink from, after we begin it. It is no eaſy matter to keep the mind cloſe at this work for any conſiderable time together.

Laſtly, It requires a conſtant dependance on, and looking to God for his Spirit's aſſiſtance and light, without which we cannot make right diſcoveries of ourſelves. Pſal. cxxxix. 23, 24.

Q. *What are theſe things we ought to examine ourſelves about, before we approach to the Lord's table?*

A. Concerning theſe five things. 1. Our ſtate and condition. 2. Our ſins and ſhort-comings. 3. Our wants and neceſſities. 4. Our ends and deſigns. 5. Our graces and qualifications.

Q. *Is it poſſible to know the ſpiritual ſtate and condition of our ſouls, if it be bad?*

A. Yes, by marks and evidences laid down in ſcripture; particularly, our ſtate is bad, if we love the world more than God; if we mind our bodies more than God; if we mind our bodies more than our ſouls. If we be inſenſible of the neceſſity and uſefulneſs of Chriſt to our ſouls. If we make religion only our bye-work, and give God no more ſervice, than what the world and fleſh can ſpare. If we live vain and careleſs lives, and allow ourſelves in known ſin, 1 John ii. 15. 2 Tim. iii. 4. John v. 40. Rom. viii. 5. Rom. x. 3. Mat. x. 37. Pſal. lxxiii. 27.

Q. *How may we know if our ſpiritual ſtate be good?*

A. By ſuch evidences as theſe. If we be heartily concerned about our ſouls and eternity, and carefully ſeek the favour of God through Chriſt: if we place our happineſs in the enjoying of communion with God, and not in the world's comforts. If Chriſt the Mediator, his ordinances, people, and all that belongs to him, be precious to us; if indwelling ſin be our burden, and we ſincerely ſtrive againſt ſin both in heart and life: if we make conſcience of our words and ways, and have a reſpect to all God's commandments. Theſe are marks of our ſtate being good, Pſal. lxxiii. 25. Rom. viii. 5. 1 Pet. ii. 7. 1 John iii. 9, 14. Gal. v. 25. Rom. vii. 24. Pſal. cxix. 6, 128.

Q. *What is that good eſtate we muſt neceſſarily be in, if we would be worthy communicants?*

A. We muſt be in covenant with God through faith in Je-

ſus Chriſt; and acquaint with a ſaving change of our hearts and natures by a work of regeneration.

Q. *Who are theſe that are in covenant with God?*

A. Theſe who have actually taken hold of the covenant of grace, and have cordially conſented to its gracious offers and terms by faith. Particularly, theſe who have been thoroughly convinced of their miſery under a covenant of works, and have betaken themſelves to the new-covenant; have heartily acquieſced in the way and method of ſalvation through Chriſt and his righteouſneſs: have cordially accepted of Chriſt in all his offices and promiſes; and in him have made choice of God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, as their God and portion; have alſo given up themſelves ſoul and body, and all they have to be the Lord's, to be for him, and not for another: and in Chriſt's ſtrength have engaged to live for God, and walk with him in newneſs of life; as becomes his covenanted people: and this is what we call our perſonal-covenanting with God, which ought to be ſolemnly gone about, by all that would ſeal a covenant with God at his table, Pſal. xvi. 2. Pſal. l. 5. Iſa. xliv. 5. Jer. l v. Pſal. cxix. 57. 2 Chron. xxx. 8. 2 Cor. viii. 5. Rom. vi. 4, 13. 2 Cor. v. 15.

Q. *Is not perſonal-covenanting with God, the ſame thing with faith?*

A. Yes, only it imports a very ſolemn, explicit, and diſtinct exerting of the ſeveral acts of faith, and lyes mainly in theſe two, acceptation and dedication.

Q. *Is our accepting of Chriſt as a Lord and ſovereign, that act of faith which entitles us to the covenant and its bleſſings; or that is the mean and inſtrument of our juſtification before God.*

A. No; For though it be eſſentially requiſite to our entering into the covenant, and neceſſarily connected with our juſtification; yet it is not, itſelf, that very act of faith, whereby we are entitled to the covenant and juſtified before God.

Q. *What is the preciſe act of juſtifying faith then, whereby that is done?*

A. The act of faith, whereby we are abſolved, reconciled and juſtified before God, and entitled to the covenant and all Chriſt's purchaſe therein offered, is precifely the ſoul's embracing Chriſt as a bleeding high prieſt, offering up himſelf a ſacrifice to divine juſtice, for expiating our guilt, and acting the part of a cautioner in paying our debt: ſo that the proper ob

ject of that faith which is justifying, 'is Christ crucified and 'his righteousness,' and upon this alone doth the believing soul rely for pardon and salvation. Yet, as I said before, with this act of faith, which accepts of Christ as a high priest and surety, is inseparably connected that other act, viz. the accepting of Christ as a King and Lord, to rule and govern us, all the days of our life; which is absolutely requisite to our covenanting with God. And hence it is that there is a distinction made, betwixt justifying faith and saving faith. So that we see personal-covenanting is also one with faith; only it comprehends more of its act than that which is precisely justifying, Deut. xxvi. 17.

Q. *Since the first act in personal covenanting is acceptation; what are these things we must accept of?*

A. We must first accept of Jesus Christ as our peace-maker, and Mediator with God, seeing it is only by him we have access to God, and all the promises come to us in him. Then we must accept of all the covenant blessings, even a whole Godhead as our portion; God the Father, as our Father in Christ; God the Son, as our redeemer, our prophet to teach us, our priest to atone for us, and our king to govern us; God the Holy Ghost as the applier of Christ's purchase by his renewing us, sanctifying, comforting and guiding us to glory. We must accept of all the divine attributes and perfections; God's wisdom for our direction, his power for our protection, his mercy for our pardon, and his faithfulness for making good all the promises to us. We must accept of all the gifts and graces of the Spirit, faith, repentance, love, hope, fear, patience, &c. as our portion in Christ. We must accept of all the divine precepts as our rule; all his ordinances and providences as our helps to heaven: his covenant as the treasure of our supplies and comforts: his rod to reclaim and spur us on to duty: his people as our companions in travel: and his heaven as our home and eternal dwelling-place.

Q. *Seeing dedication is the other act in personal covenanting, what is it we are to dedicate to God?*

A. As God gives himself wholly to us, so we must dedicate and give ourselves wholly and unreservedly to him: our souls with all their powers and faculties; our understandings o embrace God's truths; our wills to comply with his will; ur consciences to receive his orders: our memories to lay up is counsels; and our affections and desires to be centered

upon him, as the object of our happineſs. Alſo we muſt devote and give up our bodies with all their ſenſes and members to be for his ſervice; our eyes to read his word and behold his works: our ears to hear his calls; our feet to walk in ways pleaſing to him; our hands to ſupply his people in diſtreſs; and our tongues to pray, and ſpeak the language of Canaan. Again, we muſt give up our enjoyments to him, our time and talents, our eſtates and ſubſtance, our relations and friends, our gifts and graces, our power and intereſt to be employed for God and his honour, and to be entirely diſpoſed of for his ſervice and glory. Likewiſe, we muſt dedicate our ſervice and endeavours to God, with all the actions and performances of our lives; aiming at his glory in all we do, reſolving and engaging in Chriſt's ſtrength to live wholly to God, perform every duty he commands, ſuffer patiently what he lays on us, watch againſt every ſin he forbids, and renounce all his enemies. In a word, we muſt give up and reſign our whole man to God, and all that we have to be guided by his Spirit, ruled by his laws, and diſpoſed of by his providence. And in theſe things lyes our perſonal covenanting with God, which certainly is the communicant's beſt token, to warrant him to approach to the Lord's table.

Q. *Is not the gracious covenant which believers are brought into by their cloſing with Chriſt, called God's covenant, and a covenant which he makes with us? How then can we be ſaid to make a covenant with him?*

A. I grant that it is God's covenant, and that ordinarily he is ſaid to make the covenant with his people; and for this good reaſon, that God is the bleſſed author and deviſer of this covenant, the revealer and propoſer of it to us; and he that affords us grace and ſtrength to conſent to it, and do our part of the covenant. But the covenant of grace being a marriage-covenant, it neceſſarily imports in its nature a bargain that is mutual, and requires the conſent of both parties, in order to the making and concluding of it. So that we are to be active, and not wholly paſſive in this tranſaction; ſomething muſt be done on our part when we enter into this covenant; not that we have this principle of activity in and from ourſelves; no, it is the fruit of Chriſt's purchaſe, and his Spirit's operation, freely promiſed and given us by God, Jer. xxix. 13. But ſeeing this activity is put forth and exerted by our faculties, it becomes the act and deed of the gracious ſoul. That this

covenant is mutual, and doth require activity on our part, is plain from ſcripture, and the ſeveral ways that faith is expreſſed therein. Our entering into this covenant is held forth by the ſinner's yielding himſelf to the Lord, or giving his hand to the Lord, as in the original, 2 Chron. xxx. 8. By our taking hold of the covenant, Iſa. lvi. 4. Our making a covenant with God, Pſalm l. 5. 2 Chron. xxix. 10. Jer. xxxiv. 18. So that we are ſaid to make it with God, as well as he is ſaid to make it with us. Alſo, it is held forth by our joining ourſelves to the Lord in a covenant, Jer. l. 5. Our avouching the Lord to be our God, Deut. xxvi. 17. Our ſwearing to the Lord, 2 Chron. xv. 14. Our being married to the Lord, Jer. iii. 14. Hoſ. ii. 19, 20. Our ſubſcribing with the hand unto the Lord, and ſaying, 'I am the Lord's, Iſa. xliv. 5. Our ſouls ſaying to the Lord, 'Thou art my Lord, 'thou art my God, and my portion,' Pſal. xvi. 2. Pſal. xxxi. 10. Hoſ. ii. 24. Lam. iii. 24. Likewiſe in the New Teſtament, our covenanting with God is held forth by our coming unto God by Chriſt, Heb. vii. 25. Laying hold upon the hope ſet before us, Heb. vi. 18. Embracing of the promiſes, Heb. xi. 13. Receiving Chriſt, and being married to him, John i. 12. Mat. xxii. 2. Rom. vii. 4. All which expreſſions import our activity in covenanting with God. I grant indeed, that it is God that works it in us, and that it is he that is the firſt mover in this bleſſed bargain; he courts us before we conſent; he chuſes us before we chuſe him, Hoſ. ii. 23. Zech. xiii. 8, 9. ſo that this covenant is all free grace; for though God put a condition in it on our part, yet he graciouſly works it in us, and promiſes it to us, ſaying, 'Ye ſhall be my people,' Jer. xxiv. 7. Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27, 28. Phil. ii. 12, 13.

Q. *In what manner muſt we go about this work of perſonal covenanting with God?*

A. We muſt have our hearts prepared and put in a ſuitable frame for it; they muſt be ſpiritual, humble, and panting after God in Chriſt.

2dly, We muſt be deliberate in managing this weighty tranſaction, and labour to have a clear view of the nature and frame of the covenant of grace; what God offers and promiſes to us, and what he requires of us, and endeavour by grace to get our hearts wrought up to a ſtedfaſt reſolution to comply therewith.

3*dly*, We muſt ſtill bring Chriſt along with us in our covenanting with God, we muſt bring the ſacrifice of his merits to atone for the breach of the firſt covenant, and his ſuretiſhip to anſwer for our faithfulneſs in the ſecond, ere we can expect to be taken into covenant with God, and owned as his people.

4*thly*, We muſt give up and engage ourſelves to God in a moſt humble and ſelf-denied manner, narrowly watching againſt a ſelfiſh and legal frame of ſpirit in this work (which we are moſt ready to decline unto) and guarding with all care againſt any ſecret relying upon our own engagements and doings, or letting them come in the room of Chriſt, who alone is 'the Lord our righteouſneſs.' Therefore in managing this work, let us rely wholly upon Chriſt's righteouſneſs to procure us acceſs to God, and acceptance with him: and upon his ſtrength and grace both in making and performing our promiſes and engagements to him; let theſe ſcripture-texts be ſtill in our view, Pſal. l. 5. Jer. xxiii. 6. Iſa. xlv. 24. 1 Cor. i. 30. Phil. iii. 8, 9.

5*thly*, We ſhould ſet about this work of perſonal covenanting timeouſly and ſpeedily, without delay or loſs of time; and particularly let it be done in the ſeaſon of youth, or when perſons firſt gets their eyes opened to ſee their loſtneſs by nature, and their need of Chriſt.

And then, *Laſtly*, It ought to be undertaken and gone about in an humble dependance upon divine grace and conduct, with all ſecrecy and retiredneſs, ſerioufneſs and holy awe; and yet in the moſt ſolemn and explicit manner, with the expreſs words of the mouth, as well as the fixed purpoſe of the heart; yea, ſubſcribing it with the hand, and calling heaven and earth to witneſs our ſincerity in this grand affair. An example whereof I have ſubjoined in the appendix of this catechiſm.

Q. *What is the neceſſity of our perſonal covenanting with God?*

A. 1. Becauſe God requires it of us, and promiſes great happineſs to them who do it in ſincerity, 2 Chron. xxx. 8. Pſal. l. 5. Iſa. lvi. 4, 5, 6, 7.

2*dly*, The nature of faith (which is required of every man) implies covenanting with God. For faith is the uniting grace, and carries in it not only an aſſent of the underſtanding, but alſo the conſent of the will to embrace God's offer of ſalvation through Chriſt, and accept of Chriſt on his own terms, both

as our Saviour and ruler, Mat. xi. 28, 29. Mat. xvi. 24. He is a high priest on a throne, Zech. vi. 13.

3dly, Our baptism obligeth us to personal covenanting with God. For the whole of the covenant of grace is contained in baptism, and every man's consent to it is implied in these words, 'I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the 'Son, and of the Holy Ghost,' i. e. I sprinkle thee with water (which represents God's bequeathing and making over to thee all Christ's purchase) in sign and testimony that thou dost own God the Father for thy Father in Christ, God the Son for thy Redeemer, and God the holy Ghost for thy Sanctifier: Now it is certainly requisite that we should, when we come to age, personally renew our baptismal covenant and ratify our parents deed, that we may be Christians by our own free choice and consent, as well as by our parents dedication. And this every individual man and woman that would be saved, must do for themselves, by their own particular consent, and personal coming into the bond of this covenant, Ezek. xx. 37. The which, if we neglect to do, our baptism will not profit us, for God will rank and punish us with the uncircumcised, Jer. ix. 25, 26.

4thly, This was the practice of God's people of old, Deut. xxvi. 17. 2 Kings xxiii. 3. 2 Chron. xxix. 10. Neh. ix. 38. Psal. l. 5. Jer. xxxiv. 18. Jer. l. 5. Isa. lvi. 4, 6. Nay, it is the practice of all the New Testament believers, 2 Cor. viii. 5. 2 Cor. xi. 2. For our giving ourselves to the Lord in a marriage transaction, doth plainly import our personal covenanting with God.

Q. *But what warrant have we for such an express verbal way of covenanting with God, as before mentioned?*

A. I do not say that such an explicit or formal transaction is absolutely necessary to salvation, seeing a man's state is safe, if he with his heart close with God's offer of salvation through Christ. But yet this express verbal transacting is very necessary on several accounts.

1. Because it is a matter of the greatest moment and concern to our souls to be in covenant with God, and we can never be at too much pains to make it sure. Shall we be so very express, plain and peremptory in other bargains of lesser moment, and yet be content to be overly in this, upon which our eternal concerns do depend.

2dly, It is necessary, that so the impressions of our consent

and engagements to the Lord, may be fixed the deeper in our minds and memories; and ſo may be the more abiding with us.

3*dly*, It is neceſſary for the ſtrengthening of faith, and preventing many groundleſs fears and jealouſies about our ſouls eſtate. There is nothing ſo liable to be queſtioned and brought in debate as our intereſt in Chriſt, and our being in covenant with God through him; and therefore we ſhould do all we can for maintaining a comfortable ſenſe of it upon our ſpirits, that we may be the more cheerful in our obedience to God. And this way of ſolemn verbal tranſacting with God is a proper means for that end; it being, as it were, a formal inſtrument taken and put in record, of what paſſeth betwixt God and the ſoul.

4*thly*, This practice is very advantageous and ſupporting to God's people in the day of trouble and diſtreſs, or when they are in the view of death. How comfortable is it then, to call to mind former experiences of the ſouls communion with God, and particularly for them to remember how, at ſuch a time and place, they joined themſelves to the Lord in a perſonal and perpetual covenant; then and there God ſpake with them, ſealed their pardon, and owned them as his covenanted people. The ſoul was helped ſolemnly and expreſly to ſay unto the Lord, 'Thou art my God,' and God graciouſly anſwered the ſoul, 'I am thy ſalvation.' This was very comfortable to the royal Pſalmiſt in time of his greateſt ſtraits, and when in proſpect of eternity, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. Pſal. xlii. 6, 11. Pſal. lxxvii. 10, 11, 12, 13. Pſal. cxliii. 5, 6.

5*thly*, Expreſs tranſacting with God hath been the uſual practice of the beſt and holieſt of God's people: and ſtill is moſt frequent in theſe times and places, where the power and life of religion do moſt abound; this practice of God's people hath been viſibly owned by God; by this method many of them have attained to the comfortable aſſurance of their intereſt in Chriſt, and the bleſſings of the new covenant, which hath been very ſteadable to them through the whole courſe of their lives. And to the neglect of this ancient and uſeful practice, many think the great decay of religion in our day is to be imputed.

6*thly*, There is ſolid foundation and warrant given us for expreſs verbal tranſacting with God, from his word and the practice of his ſaints therein recorded. For the covenant be-

twixt God and his people is there repreſented by a marriage-covenant betwixt huſband and wife, Hoſ. ii. 19, 20. 2 Cor. xi. 2. And we know it is neceſſary that the wife give expreſs and explicit conſent to the huſband, as well as the huſband to the wife. And therefore the Lord ſaith to his people, 'Thou ſhalt call me Iſhi,' i. e. my huſband, 'and thou 'ſhalt not be for another, ſo alſo will I be for thee,' Hoſ. ii. 16. Hoſ. iii. 3. Such a conſent gave the ſpouſe, Cant. vi. 3. 'I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine.' Likewiſe our joining ourſelves to the Lord in this covenant, is called a giving the hand to the Lord, which imports a moſt poſitive and expreſs way of tranſacting, 2 Chron. xxx 8. Again he ſaith, 'One ſhall ſay I am the Lord's, and another ſhall ſubſcribe 'with his hand unto the Lord,' Iſa. xliv. 5. Theſe and many other ſcriptures, that might be cited, import a moſt expreſs and formal conſent in this covenant, to be neceſſary and warrantable on our part, Jer. iii. 4, 19. Iſa. xlv. 24. Zech. xiii. 9. Which alſo we have exemplified, in the practices of Jacob, David, Hezekiah, Nehemiah, Thomas, and other ſaints, Gen. xxviii. 20, 21. Pſal. xvi. 2. 2 Chron. xxix. 10. Neh. ix. 38. John xx. 28. Pſal. cxl. 6.

Q. *What are the proper ſeaſons for expreſs covenanting with God?*

A. 1. In time of youth, when the heart is moſt tender and melting: and eſpecially when perſons are firſt brought under convictions, and are about to renew their baptiſmal engagements, and approach to the Lord's table, for receiving the ſecond ſeal of God's covenant, Pſal. lxxi. 5, 17. Jer. ii. 2. Jer. iii. 4.

2*dly*, This practice is to be renewed upon ſome ſpecial occaſions. As, 1. In time of great backſliding, and deep humiliation for the ſame, Neh. ix. 29. 2*dly*, In time of great ſtraits and imminent dangers Gen. xxxii. 9, 26. Pſal. xxxi. 14. Pſal. lvii. 1, 2. 3*dly*, When perſons are undertaking ſome great and difficult work, as Joſhua when Iſrael was to ſettle in Canaan in the midſt of ſnares, Joſh. xxiv. 23, 24, 25. And Jacob when going to Padan-aram, Gen. xxviii. 20, 21. 4*thly*, When believers are under deſertion, and in the dark about their caſe, and through temptations brought to queſtion if ever they really covenanted with God; then it is proper to eſſay the matter of new, and do what we can to put it out of doubt, by ſaying expreſsly to God, thou art my God and

my portion, Pſal. xxxi. 14. Pſal. cxlii. 5. So the ſpouſe when deſerted, profeſſed and avowed Chriſt as her beloved, Cant. v. 4. and vi. 3. *5thly*, Some have repeated this practice with comfort at the beginning of every year. I grant indeed there is hazard leſt people by frequent expreſs covenanting with God, turn too formal in it: and therefore, it may be as fit on ſome occaſions, to declare in the ſight of God, our adherence to the covenant formerly made. Formality and overlineſs in this work, ſhould be eſpecially guarded againſt; for our expreſs verbal covenanting is of no worth, unleſs heart-covenanting be joined with it. It is a mocking of God, to draw nigh unto him with the lips, when the heart is away.

Q. *What ſhall we think of theſe, who apprehend that they once covenanted with God in Chriſt, but by their ſins they have broke their engagements, and ſo are no more to be reckoned God's covenanted people?*

A. 1. All ſuch have cauſe to be humbled deeply for their ſins, whereby they have broken covenant with God: and if they be not humbled on this account, they have indeed ground to ſuſpect themſelves, that they were never truly God's covenanted people.

2dly, We ought to remember that the covenant of works and the covenant of grace differ vaſtly in their nature: for the firſt could be violated by the leaſt ſin, but the ſecond cannot be diſſolved by any ſin of the covenanted. For though we break the engagement we come under when we enter into this covenant; yet God will not break the promiſes he makes on his part. God's gracious covenant with his people ſtands firm and undiſſolved, notwithſtanding of many breaches and failures on their part; becauſe there is a ſurety in this covenant, from whom he receives ſatisfaction for the ſins of the covenanted: and upon this account, it is provided as a ſpecial article of this covenant, that God will forgive the ſins and breaches of his covenanted people, when they confeſs them, and ſue for pardon for their ſurety's ſake: and hence it is, that the covenant of grace is perpetual and indiſſolvable, and theſe who are once in covenant with God, are ſtill in it, Jer. xxxi. 32, 34. Pſal. lxxxix. 31, 34. Iſa. liv. 8. 1 John i. 9. 1 John ii. 1.

3dly, All ſenſible backſliders, covenant-breakers, and treacherous dealers of any ſort, are graciouſly invited and en-

couraged by God to return to him, and renew their covenant again, Jer. iii. 1, 12, 13, 14, 19, 20, 21, 22. Hoſ. xiv. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Q. *But what if we ſhould juſt break over again: Is it not better not to engage, and come under new obligations, which would but aggravate our guilt?*

A. 1. It would be a fearful aggravation of ſin indeed to come under new engagements to God, without having a ſincere deſign of keeping them.

2*dly*, We are peremptorily obliged by God's command to renew covenant with him, and not left to our freedom to come under new engagements or not, as we think fit.

3*dly*, It is good to be jealous of ourſelves in taking on new engagements; for the weaker we be in our own eyes, and the more we diſtruſt our own ſtrength, the ſtronger and ſafer we really are, 2 Cor. xii. 10.

4*thly*, If we covenant honeſtly with God through Chriſt our ſurety, we may expect ſufficient covenanted grace and ſtrength, for breaking the power of ſin in us, and enabling us to wreſtle againſt it. And likewiſe we will have our ſurety engaged to anſwer for all our failures; and though we be weak, to be ſure he is ſufficiently able and ſponſible for us.

Q. *Is not this doctrine concerning the perpetuity of the covenant, and Chriſt's ſuretiſhip for us, an encouragement to people to turn licentious in their walk?*

A. Not at all; for, on the contrary, believers are hereby laid under the ſtricter obligations to love God and Chriſt, which love will ſurely and ſweetly conſtrain them to an holy and obedient walk. And whoever they be that improve this doctrine as an encouragement to ſin, they are none of God's covenanted people; for it is the character of the ungodly, 'to turn the grace of God into laſciviouſneſs:' and though they ſhould do ſo, yet the foreſaid doctrine is true, and neceſſary to be publiſhed, to prevent dejected ſouls being ſunk with diſcouragement, or driven into deſpair, Rom. vi. 1. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. Gal. vi. 1. Jude verſe 4.

Q. *But what ſhall be ſaid to thoſe, who are ſo diſcouraged with a ſenſe of their own unworthineſs to enter into covenant with God, that they ſuſpect God is not willing to accept of them?*

A. 1. God never refuſed to enter into covenant with any upon the account of unworthineſs. Who more vile than Ma-

naſſeh, and yet God excluded him not upon his humble application. Who more unworthy than the prodigal, that forſook his father, and took on to ſerve the devil and his ſwiniſh luſts, and yet upon his return, the father takes him into his arms, rejoices in him as his dear child, and calls heaven and earth to rejoice with him too, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 12, 13. Luke xv. 13, 15.

2*dly*, God never took any into covenant with him but the unworthy; for God's covenanting with any of the ſinful poſterity of Adam (who are all of them utterly unworthy of this privilege) is an act of pure grace, and free condeſcending love, which all his people will have reaſon to admire and glorify to all the ages of eternity.

3*dly*, The more ſenſible we are of unworthineſs, and humbled for it, the more fit we are for covenanting with God; for it is ſuch he hath promiſed to accept, Pſal. x. 17. Iſa. lxvi. 2. Matth. v. 3.

4*thly*, Though we be altogether unworthy, in ourſelves, of being taken into covenant with God; yet worthy is the Lamb our ſurety, who hath merited this privilege to unworthy ſinners, and it is only his worthineſs that we muſt plead.

5*thly*, We have the plaineſt calls, and moſt preſſing invitations from God to the unworthieſt of ſinners to come and enter into covenant with him, and many arguments made uſe of to engage them to it, 2 Chron. xxx. 8. Iſa. li. 4. Iſa. lv. 3, 7. Ezek. xviii. 30, 32. 2 Cor. v. 20. Now for any to doubt of God's willingneſs to enter into covenant with them, after theſe plain proofs which he has given us of it, is no leſs than to ſuſpect God's ſincerity and ingenuity in his offers and declarations; which muſt be no ſmall crime.

Q. *But what ſhall be ſaid of theſe, who have many times refuſed God's gracious offers, and hence are afraid that he will not accept of them now?*

A. 1. They ought to be deeply humbled for the former refuſals they have given. 2*dly*, Bleſs God that the treaty is not yet broke off, and that his gracious offers are ſtill ſounding in their ears. 3*dly*, The longer they have formerly refuſed, the more haſte ought they now to make to come and take hold of God's covenant, that they may not provoke him by refuſing or delaying any longer.

Q. *But have we ſtrength of ourſelves to take hold of this covenant and tranſact with God?*

A. 1. I grant we have not, but yet it is not here that the bargain sticks: it is not so much for want of power, as want of will, that this transaction is not made; for if once we were willing, strength would not be wanting. It is our unwillingness that ruins us, John v. 40.

2*dly*, We ought to be deeply humbled under a sense of our impotency before God, lye groaning in his way, plead earnestly for pity, and flee to God's power, Christ's grace, and the Spirit's assistance, to enable us for this work, begging importunately, that according to his promise, for Christ's sake, he would put a principle of life and activity in us, that we may covenant with God, and close a bargain with him through Christ.

3*dly*, As we ought to be looking and seeking for this principle of activity from God; so we must not lay aside our own endeavours and efforts (weak as they are) till we know that we have this principle of the Spirit's concurrence with us, for commonly the Spirit's work in the soul is not discernible at first: but (seeing the duty is ours, though the work be the Spirit's) we ought, in a humble dependence on Christ and his Spirit for strength, to be aiming and minting to close with God in Christ, take hold of his covenant, and consent to the gospel method of salvation, as we can; and if by any means we can get a grip of this covenant, let us take it, and say, with our souls, to the Lord, 'Thou art my God.' For it pleaseth God to see us minting our duty, and he useth to join weak endeavours, and work in and by our own activity and weak mints, gradually influencing and inclining our hearts and wills to spiritual things, and holy duties, Luke xi. 13. Isa. lxiv. 5. Jer. xxx. 21, 22. Jer. xxxi. 18. Hos. xiv. 2, 3, 4. Faith ordinarily comes at first to Christ, with a weak and trembling hand, minting to take hold of God's covenant, and the offers of grace, but knows not if these mints shall be any way available; faith even adventures on *a may-be*, 'It may be the Lord 'will be gracious: who knows but he will return, Amos v. 15. Joel ii. 14.

Q. *What shall we say of those who refuse to enter into covenant with God, because they suspect they are none of God's elect, and so have no right to God's covenant?*

A. We are to look on this suspicion as a temptation of Satan, designed by him to hinder sinners from Christ, or to drive them to desperation, and therefore ought to be resisted.

For, 1. It is a great madneſs to open our ears to the ſuggeſtions of the devil, who is a liar and murderer from the beginning, and ſtop them from hearing the voice of the God of mercy and truth ſpeaking to us in the ſcripture, and calling us to take hold of his covenant.

2*dly*, It is high preſumption to intrude ourſelves into the ſecret decrees of God, which he hath forbid us to pry into; and to reject theſe plain duties which he hath commanded: 'For ſecret things belong unto God, but revealed things to 'us,' Deut. xxix. 29.

3*dly*, The way to know our election is to make ſure our effectual calling, which, muſt be by entering into covenant with God through Jeſus Chriſt, and turning our back upon ſin; which, if our hearts be determined to do, we may ſurely conclude we are elect veſſels; for turning to God in Chriſt is a fruit and certain proof of election, 2 Pet. i. 10.

4*thly*, This way of acting in ſoul matters muſt be altogether againſt reaſon, ſeeing it is ſo in things reſpecting the body. We would reckon him a ſelf-murderer, that would take no food, nor uſe any means for preſerving his natural life, becauſe of an apprehenſion he hath, that he is appointed to die in a ſhort time. So they murder their ſouls, who will not uſe the means of ſpiritual life, becauſe they fear they are not elected. Again, if we have but a probability of gaining ſome temporal advantage, though not a certainty, we will venture and run ſome hazard for it: and do we think heaven and eternal glory ſuch ſmall things, that we will not venture and eſſay to take hold of God's covenant in order to obtain them?

Q. *What ſhall we ſay of thoſe, who fear it is now out of time for them to attempt this, becauſe they ſuſpect their day of grace is paſt, and the door is ſhut?*

A. 1. I grant there are not a few who provoke God to ſhut the door and give up with them, becauſe of their long grieving and quenching the Spirit of God, and living ſecurely in known wickedneſs, under the moſt ſearching and lively ſermons; upon which account he withdraws his Spirit, and plagues many with judicial obduration, ſo that no means can do them any good. Wherefore if we in any meaſure be guilty of the foreſaid ſins, it ſhould be matter of great mourning and humiliation to us.

2*dly*, Cloſing with Chriſt, in the goſpel-offers, can never be too late, nor out of time; for God hath ſaid, 'Whoſoever

'believeth in Chriſt ſhall not periſh, but have everlaſting life.' But ſaith not, if they do not believe againſt ſuch a time, they ſhall be excluded; no, the offer is made to all ſinners whatſomever, and late believers or repenters are not excepted from the benefit of it more than others.

3*dly*, They that can ſay, they ſincerely deſire God's favour, and heart-holineſs, the death of ſin, and true love to God, more than all the glory of the world: or, that they ſigh and groan after Chriſt, and would fain have him for their Lord and Saviour; it is a ſign their day of grace is not over, for theſe very deſires are ſome degrees of grace, and a certain evidence that God ſtill continues to deal with their hearts.

Q. *What are the marks of thoſe, who are truly God's covenanted people?*

A. They are a willing people, a humble and ſelf-denying people: they are an holy people, zealous of good works: they are a thankful and God-exalting people. Jeſus Chriſt the Mediator and ſurety of the covenant, is very precious to them. The free grace of the covenant is the matter of their wonder and admiration. They are inclined to perform covenant duties, and that in a covenant way, relying on covenant ſtrength, from a principle of love and gratitude to the covenanted God, and with an eye to glorify his name, Pſalm cx. 3. Ezek. xvi. 62, 63. Tit. ii. 14. Iſa. lv. 1. Pſal. cxv. 1. Iſa. xiv. 24. Iſa. lvi. 4, 5, 6.

Q. *Are not theſe, that are truly in covenant with God, acquainted with the new birth and a work of regeneration?*

A. Yes; for theſe two, being in covenant with God by faith in Jeſus Chriſt, and being renewed or born again, are inſeparably connected, Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27, 28. 1 Cor. v. 17.

Q. *What is it that you underſtand by the new birth, or a work of regeneration?*

A. Theſe words, the new birth, new creature, regeneration, renovation, converſion, and effectual calling, are commonly uſed to denote the ſame thing: and they ſignify, that gracious and ſaving change which is wrought upon the whole man, both inwardly and outwardly, by the almighty power and grace of the Spirit of God, by the means of his word: whereby the ſoul, being awakened to ſee its miſery and danger in a natural ſtate, is humbled for it, and powerfully drawn and determined to come to Jeſus Chriſt for remedy, the mind

is savingly enlightned, the will is made pliable, the heart is melted and made new, the seeds of grace are sown therein, sin's power is broken, the outward life is reformed, and the whole man is turned from sin to Jesus Christ and his ways, firmly resolving through his strength, to walk with him constantly in the practice of holiness and duties of religion, Eph. i. 18, 19. Tit. iii. 4, 5. Acts xxvi. 18. Ezek. xxxvi. 27, 29. Rom. vi. 6. Eph. iv. 23, 24. 1 John iii. 9.

Q. *What are the signs of a person that is unregenerate, and in a state of nature?*

A. They are such, 1. Who love the world and the things of it more than God, 1 John ii. 15. James iv. 4.

2*dly*, Who against light live in the practice of secret wickedness, or regard iniquity in their hearts, Col. iii. 5, 6. Isa. i. 13, 14, 15. Jer. xliv. 16.

3*dly*, Who believe not the report of the gospel concerning Jesus Christ, John iii. 36. John viii. 24.

4*thly*, Who go about to establish their own righteousness, not submitting to the righteousness of Christ, Rom. x. 3.

5*thly*, Who are haters of the people of God, 1 John ii. 9. John iii. 10.

Q. *Have such, who upon self-examination find themselves in that state, any cause to despair of mercy?*

A. Though they may despair of help from themselves, or of help from God while they resolve to continue in sin; yet they are to believe there is a door of mercy and hope opened to the greatest sinners in the gospel through Christ, seeing he is willing to accept of all who are sensible of sin and misery, and come to him for help. And to despair of mercy in Christ is the greatest slight and dishonour that can be done to him and his most efficacious blood, Matth. xi. 28. 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10, 11. 1 John i. 7. Lam. iii. 26.

Q. *What course shall these sinners take, who are convinced of their bad estate, in order to be brought out of it?*

A. 1. They ought to cherish convictions, and labour for a deep and thorough sense of sin and misery, Matth. ix. 12. Luke iv. 18.

2*dly*, They are to be diligent in attending upon the word, and in the use of prayer and meditation, John v. 25. 1 Pet. i. 23. Acts ix. 11.

3*dly*, They are to believe, though neither faith nor repentance be in their power, yet they are both purchased by

lievers to examine and find out the marks of this gracious ſtate: for ordinarily, then, Satan raiſes many fogs and miſts to obſcure their grace, and the ſaving change the Spirit of God hath wrought in their ſouls, that they cannot poſſibly diſcover it; ſo that they muſt wait a fitter opportunity for this work.

2dly, We ought not to overlook the loweſt marks of grace, but be thankful, if we can at leaſt ſay, our ſouls deſire grace and an intereſt in Chriſt above all things: and that we are much troubled and caſt down for want of clear evidences thereof; and though we cannot ſay we have true love to Chriſt, yet it is our greateſt grief, that we cannot get our wretched hearts to love him: and tho' we cannot ſay we believe in Chriſt, yet we reſolve never to rely on our own righteouſneſs, nor ſeek another Saviour, but to caſt our ſouls down at his feet, and look up to him, and none other for help: and though we cannot ſay, he will have mercy upon us; yet nothing in all the world would ſo pleaſe our hearts, as one ray or love-blink of his countenance. And though we cannot ſay, we have true repentance, or any gracious change wrought in us; yet we reſolve never to give over duty, nor give way to known ſin; we will find thirſt for Chriſt as our Saviour, and for heaven as our home. Then, I ſay, we ought to be thankful, for theſe, though oft overlookt, are ſome degrees of faith, and evidences of the Spirit's work in the heart; for the leaſt degree of grace, is grace, as well as that which is ſtronger: as the leaſt ſpark of a diamond, is truly a diamond, as well as bigger ſtones; and the leaſt drop of dew is water, as well as a river. We read of little faith, and of faith like a grain of muſtard-ſeed, which nevertheleſs is true faith, as well as that which is ſtronger; and we muſt not 'deſpiſe the day of ſmall 'things,' Matth. viii. 26. Matth. xvii. 20. Zech. iv. 10. Mark viii. 24. Mark ix. 24. Job xiii. 15. Matth. v. 6. Matth. xii. 20.

3dly, If we cannot attain to clearneſs, by poring on the marks of a gracious change, or of ſaving faith in us, (as indeed ſometimes believers cannot, ſince there is no mark can be given, but a ſcrupulous conſcience will find an evaſion or back-door) then let us try to act faith in a direct manner upon Jeſus Chriſt; for often believers come ſooner to clearneſs about their intereſt in him, by the direct acts of faith, than by the reflex acts. Therefore, let us flee to Chriſt for refuge, and lay hold upon the promiſe and offer of life through him, as

if we had never done it before. Let us go and tranſact a covenant with God in Chriſt, as if we had never eſſayed any thing like it before; and poſſibly our fears will ſoon evaniſh, and light break in, Pſalm xcvii. 11.

Q. *But can we never conclude, that we are renewed, and in a gracious ſtate, till we feel the pangs of the new birth, be acquaint with a law-work, and deep humiliation for ſin: do not theſe neceſſarily go before our cloſing with Chriſt?*

A. 1. I grant indeed, that the operation of the ſpirit of conviction by the law, or the ſpirit of bondage, doth ordinarily go before the ſpirit of adoption, and the intimations of pardon by Chriſt. And that all who come to Chriſt, muſt come in the due ſenſe of their ſin and miſery by nature. And that ſome have had a great meaſure of conviction, ſorrow and humiliation for ſin, Rom. viii. 15. Matth. ix. 12. Acts ii. 37. Pſal. lxxviii. 11.

2*dly*, God is a ſovereign free agent, and is not tied to one way of working in theſe he brings home to himſelf. Some he brings in very early in their childhood, ſo that they do not remember the workings of God's Spirit in them, which they have truly felt. And theſe he brings in, in riper years, he deals variouſly with them: in ſome the work of humiliation is very great and diſcernible; but in others not, as in Zaccheus and Lydia. In ſome, humiliation-work is deep and ſhort as was in the jailor, and the three thouſand converted by Peter's ſermon, who were convinced and pricked in their hearts, repented and cloſed with Chriſt by faith, were converted and baptized all in a few hours, Acts ii. 37, 41. Acts xvi. 30, 33, 34. In others again, this work is not ſo deep, but of longer continuance. Some God calls not home, till they have run a long race in a courſe of open ſin, and rebellion againſt God, and theſe he uſeth to humble more deeply, and for a longer time; ſo that they can better obſerve the ſteps of the Spirit's working in them, than others. Paul was three days under deep conviction and humiliation, Acts vi. Others again, are in the time of their youth, reſtrained from groſs ſins, and have had always ſome liking to religion, and the people of God, yet, without ſaving grace: when God brings theſe in, uſually their humiliation is not ſo deep as others. Nay, ſome are drawn to Chriſt by the ſweet cords of love, and ſcarce know any thing of theſe mount Sinai thunderings, or the legal ſhakings and terrors that others are ſorely broken and exerciſed with. They are called in by

the ſtill and calm voice of the goſpel, which convinces them in a kindly manner, melts their hearts for wounding of Chriſt, and warms their ſouls with the gracious diſcoveries of his free love and matchleſs excellencies, which makes them to ſtand and wonder, and readily to yield themſelves his captives. Zaccheus was ſoon ſurpriſed with the love offers Chriſt made to his ſoul, ſo that he came down in haſte, and received him joyfully.

3*dly*, I grant, that theſe who are brought in without a diſcernible law-work, are ordinarily more in the dark afterwards about their ſouls eſtate than others; becauſe their change was not ſo remarkable. Satan oft makes more ſucceſsful attacks upon them to drive them to doubting and deſpondency, than on thoſe who are gained by the law-terrors; and hence they are frequently tempted to raze the foundation.

4*thly*, As God doth not limit himſelf to one way of working, ſo none can preſcribe what time or degree of humiliation is ſufficient or neceſſary for the ſoul's converſion and cloſing with Chriſt. Only if we have as much of it as is neceſſary to let us ſee our need of Chriſt, and determine us to paſs through all difficulties to come at him for ſalvation; and cauſe us to loath ourſelves in duſt and aſhes, and to hate every ſin, and break off from it; I ſay, if this be obtained, which is the true end of humiliation, we have no ground to deſpond for want of ſuch particular degrees and meaſures of it. Who can tell what meaſure of it Zaccheus, the Ethiopian Eunuch, Lydia, and others had, whoſe heart the Lord ſuddenly opened by his word, to Chriſt: they had ſo much as made them break through all oppoſitions to Chriſt, and willing to cloſe with him on his own terms, and to reckon him more lovely than heaven and earth, and all their idols and enjoyments in a world, and ſay none but Chriſt; which if we can win to, we need not be troubled, though we have not been ſo long in the depths and in the dark as others. For Chriſt did never put any away from him upon that account; he ſaith not, the man that comes to me convinced and humbled in ſuch a meaſure, I will receive: but, 'him that cometh to me, I will in no wiſe caſt 'out.' Our coming to Chriſt is a certain proof of our having ſeen our miſery, and the worth of Chriſt, which is the main thing required of us.

5*thly*, Our keeping off from Chriſt, till we attain ſuch a meaſure of ſorrow and humiliation, favours too much of the covenant of works (which all Adam's children naturally in-

cline to be juſtified by) for herein we are prone to affect making ſome ſort of expiation or atonement for ſin of our own, or to ſeek a price to bring in our hands to Chriſt, whereby we might purchaſe his blood, or ſome way deſerve him, and his righteouſneſs; which is a dangerous practical error.

6thly, Our not being humbled enough for ſin, ſhould not make us linger in flying to Chriſt; but rather haſten our flight to him, who 'is exalted as a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance to Iſrael, as well as forgiveneſs of ſin.' Let us then be ſenſible of the hardneſs of our hearts, and humbled ſo much the more, that we are not humbled as we ought to be for offending God; and ſo let us run into Chriſt, that he may give us a better meaſure of humiliation and repentance, Acts v. 31.

Q. *What ſhall we think of theſe exerciſed perſons, who doubt of their converſion, becauſe they know not the time when it was?*

A. There are ſeveral things ſaid upon the former queſtion, which may help to reſolve this:

To which I add, 1. That the converſion of ſome is ſo remarkable, that it is no hard matter for them to be particular as to the time of it; and it is very comfortable to ſuch as can be ſo.

But *2dly*, There are others, who are brought in by the calm goſpel way, in whom faith, repentance, and a holy life have been gradually wrought, and grown ſomewhat inſenſibly with the growing knowledge of the goſpel and the will of God revealed therein, of whom it may be truly ſaid, the 'kingdom of God cometh not with obſervation;' ſo that they cannot particularize the time of their converſion, Mark iv. 26, 27. Luke xvii. 20.

3dly, We ought to look into our hearts, and examine if Chriſt's Spirit be dwelling there, and if we find that he is, we need not trouble ourſelves though we know not the particular time and manner of his entrance. Let us try if we value Chriſt above the world, and deſire nearneſs to him, rather than the beſt things in the world, if we would rather diſpleaſe all the world than diſpleaſe him. And alſo, if we be acquaint with the illuminating work of his Spirit, making new diſcoveries of things to us, which we had not before; and though we cannot tell exactly the time, manner, and ſteps of the change, yet if we can ſay with that blind man, John ix.

25. 'One thing I know, that whereas I was once blind, now 'I see.' Once I saw little evil in sin, but now I see it exceeding sinful and damnable. Once I saw little evil in my nature, but now I see my nature corrupt, and my heart deceitful and desperately wicked, swarming full of vile lusts. Once I thought something of my own performances, but now I see them all to be loss and dung. Once I saw little need of Christ, but now I see him to be more necessary to my soul, than food to my body. Once I thought I might perform duty well enough in my own strength, but now I see I can do nothing without Christ. Once I saw little beauty in Christ, but now I see he is the 'rose of Sharon, and the chiefest among ten thousand;' nay, among all the thousands in heaven and earth. Well, if this be our case, we need not be anxious to know what day, month, or year, the Holy Spirit wrought these things in us; for to be sure, the happy change is wrought, for though once 'we were in darkness, yet now are we light in the Lord,' Eph. v. 8. Phil. iii. 3, 8, 9. Cant. v. 9, 10. 1 Pet. ii. 7.

Q. *But what shall exercised souls do, who, after all pains and searchings, still doubt of their being in covenant with God, and in a gracious state? Can such doubting souls adventure to the Lord's table?*

A. There are many exercised persons, who doubt much of their being in a gracious state, and yet are really in it, though they cannot attain the assurance of it. Many have great fears and perplexities because of the weakness of their faith, and yet their weak faith is truly faith. Wherefore, if such doubting souls be truly concerned and affected for the weakness of faith and want of suitable preparation for covenanting with God, and if they can say they have unfeigned desires to be found in Christ, and to be in covenant with God, and to part with every known sin, and also willing to be at all pains to prepare for this ordinance, in the use of the means of God's appointment, then they may adventure to come to it: for sincere desires to believe and close with Christ, are some degrees of faith: and this sacrament is appointed for the relief, strengthening and establishment of weak and doubting believers, who bewail their unbelief, and look to Christ for help, Isa. l. 10. Isa. xl. 11, 29, 31. Mark ix. 24, 25. Psal. x. 17. Psal. lxii. 2, 5. Matth. xi. 28. Matth. xii. 29.

Q. *What then is the meaning of that scripture,* Rom. xiv. 23. He that doubteth is damned if he eat?

A. The apoſtle there is diſſuading from eating of fleſh that was ſacrificed or dedicate to idols, for fear of giving offence. And his meaning is, he that doubts of that meat, whether it be lawful or not, and yet ventures on that, whereof he is not perſuaded of its lawfulneſs, he wrongs his own conſcience and offends God; which indeed is damnable in itſelf, as being againſt his light. The apoſtle is not ſpeaking there of the Lord's ſupper, which is in itſelf a plainly commanded duty, and the neglect whereof is infallibly ſinful: but of eating fleſh that had been dedicate to idols, which was doubtful in itſelf, and became plainly ſinful, as it gave offence to weak brethren.

Concerning the Examination of our SINS.

Queſt. *SEEING the next thing to be examined after our ſtate, is our ſins and ſhort-comings; How are we to examine theſe, before our coming to the Lord's-table?*

A. We ought to ſet time apart, and convene our ſouls before God and conſcience, and compare our hearts and lives with the rule of God's commandments. And for this end, we muſt pray for the light and aſſiſtance of God's Spirit, look into our hearts, look back to our former ways, and take a full and particular view of all our ſins, ſo far as we can remember, ſins both original and actual, ſins of youth and riper age, ſins of heart and of life, ſins of purpoſe and of practice, ſins of omiſſion and of commiſſion, ſins ſecret and open, ſins in thoughts, words and deeds. We are to conſider our ſins both againſt the firſt and ſecond table of the law, how we have injured God, our neighbours, ourſelves, with all the heinous circumſtances and aggravations of our ſins. And in order to get a full diſcovery of our manifold tranſgreſſions and ſins againſt every one of God's commandments, let us ſeriouſly read over the queſtions of our Larger Catechiſm, concerning the duties required, and the ſins forbidden in each of the ten commandments, and alſo concerning thoſe aggravations, (thereafter mentioned) which make ſome ſins more heinous than others, with the ſcriptures there adduced for proving theſe things: and there we may get (through the bleſſing of God) a moſt ſurpriſing and humbling ſight of our guilt

and innumerable tranſgreſſions before God, both of omiſſion and commiſſion, of heart and life, ſecret and open, that may cauſe us, with bitter lamentation, cry out with the Pſalmiſt, in prayer to God, Pſal. xix. 12. 'Who can underſtand his 'errors, cleanſe thou me from ſecret faults?' And in a ſpecial manner, we ought to ſearch for our predominant ſins and idols, and particularly to examine into theſe defilements, and that guilt which we have contracted, whether by the luſts of our hearts, or the out-breakings of our lives, ſince the laſt approach we made to the Lord's table.

Q. *What are theſe luſts and plagues of the heart, that we ſhould be moſt concerned about, in ſelf-examination?*

A. They can ſcarcely be numbered, and therefore, referring to the Larger Catechiſm, as afore-cited, for a more particular view of them, I only add this word, that we ought with deep concernment of ſoul to inquire into theſe grievous heart-plagues, viz. our atheiſm, unbelief, worldly-mindedneſs, pride, impenitency, forgetfulneſs of God, ſlighting of Chriſt offered in the goſpel, our averſion to duty, ingratitude for mercies, ſecurity and formality, unmindfulneſs of death and eternity; our heart-backſlidings, wanderings and wearying in duty, reſting upon duties, forgetfulneſs of ſolemn vows, our malice, paſſion, envy, diſcontent, &c.

Q. *What ſhould we think or ſay of theſe, who, upon examination, complain that they find theſe heart-plagues upon the growing hand in them, and hence are ready to conclude themſelves hypocrites or unbelievers?*

A. 1. If theſe heart-evils be ſtrong or prevailing in them, and they not concerned or exerciſed upon that account, it is a very bad ſign indeed. But if they be truly concerned, they ought to remember that the beſt of God's people have alſo complained of prevailing ſins and heart-plagues, Pſal. lxv. 3. Rom. vii. 21, 23, 24.

2*dly*, Let us examine whether the power and prevalency of ſin in us be ſuch, as may be conſiſtent with a gracious ſtate, or not. 1. Are theſe luſts and heart-plagues our daily grief and burden? Are they matter of exerciſe and trouble to us? Do we groan under them, pray and ſtrive againſt them? Would we reckon it the greateſt happineſs in the world to be freed from them? And do the hopes of being delivered from them at laſt, ſweeten the thoughts of death and heaven to us? Then is a good ſign, Pſal. lxvi. 18. Rom. vi. 14. Phil i. 23.

2*dly*, Do we carefully set ourselves to oppose and watch against the outbreakings of these lusts, whether in words or deeds; and sincerely desire, and breathe after universal holiness? Then it is a good mark, Psal. xviii. 23. Psal. cxix. 5, 6.

3*dly*, When any sin prevails or breaks out, are we humbled for it? Do we lay the whole blame on ourselves, and heartily approve God's law? Saying with Paul, 'The law is spiritual; 'yea, it is holy, just and good, but I (wretched I) am car-'nal and sold under sin:' O for an entire conformity to that holy and excellent law! Rom. vii. 12, 14, 22.

4*thly*, Are we restless till we flee to the blood of Christ for pardon of, and cleansing from any such prevailing sin? And never in our element till we get the upper hand of it, and be in God's way again? Rom. vii. 24, 25.

5*thly*, Are we resolved in Christ's strength never to submit to or make peace with our lusts, but all our days to wage war against them, and cleave close to the 'Captain of our salva-'tion,' looking to him for sanctifying grace, for armiture and spiritual weapons for this warfare? Then it is a sign we are no hypocrites, but grace is in the heart, and faith will have the day at last, Acts xv. 9. Heb. xi. 33, 34. 1 John v. 4.

Q. *But what shall be said of those, who after search, do find the woful prevalency of the sad heart-plague of backwardness and unwillingness to duty, and especially secret duties: is there any comfort for such?*

A. 1. Where this is found, and the heart is backward particularly to secret prayer, it appears that corruption is in some strength, and gives ground for great searchings and thoughts of heart, and should be matter of deep humiliation in the sight of God.

2*dly*, We ought not hence to despair, if we consider that in the best of God's people, there is a mixture of willingness and unwillingness, they are composed of spirit and flesh, which act contrary to one another; so that many times, 'they cannot 'do the good which they would,' Gal. v. 17. Rom. vii. 19. And hence it was that Christ made apology for his disciples, when they omitted watching and prayer, and fell asleep again and again, after warning and excitation thereto, 'The 'spirit indeed is willing but the flesh is weak;' there was a weakness, weariness and unwillingness in their flesh, though there was still a willingness in their spirit, and renewed part, Matth. xxvi. 41.

3*dly*, Let us examine, if we can ſay, that our wearineſs and unwillingneſs is our greateſt burden and affliction; that we are weary of it, reſolve never to give way to it, but always to ſtruggle againſt it, and keep up duty as we can. Then there is ground of hope, ſeeing our unwillingneſs is not yielded to, for if that were the caſe, we would turn our back on duty altogether. Let us not in this caſe, wholly caſt away our confidence, but wait and pray in hope, for a time of reviving, and a day of the Mediator's power.

Q. *What ſhall theſe do, who upon trial find themſelves guilty of great unthankfulneſs for mercies, yea, of backſlidings and breach of ſolemn vows made at ſacrament occaſions? How can ſuch adventure to approach again to the Lord's table?*

A. 1. Theſe things ſhould be matter of great ſadneſs and ſorrow of heart to us; as certainly they will be to every ſincere ſoul.

2. We ought not to 'ſorrow as theſe who have no hope,' but in a [illegible] ſenſe of theſe God-provoking evils, return to him, whom we have grieved, with ſhame and bluſhing of face; and rightly 'conſider what an evil and bitter thing it is to forſake the Lord,' Ezra [illegible], 6. Jer. ii. 19.

3*dly*, Let us do all this with expedition, for not to be ſpeedy in our return is, upon the matter, to approve and vindicate our former backſliding; which will ſtill be more provoking.

4*thly*, We ought to conſider and believe that in our covenanted Redeemer, there is ſufficient fund for ſtocking and ſetting up poor bankrupt ſinners of new; for 'in him dwells 'all fulneſs' for his people's emptineſs, and may be had too, at a very cheap rate, Col, i. 19. Iſa. lv. 1.

5*thly*, For our encouragement let us take a view of his kindly and engaging invitations to bankrupt and backſliding ſouls to return to him again, with his free promiſes of pardoning mercy and ſanctifying grace to them upon their ſo doing, Jer. iii. 1, 12, 13, 14, 22. Hoſ. xiv. 1, 2, 3, 4. One would think a ſerious conſideration of theſe many charming and alluring calls might overcome and melt the moſt backſliding heart in the world. Can we but wonder, and ſay! 'Cer-'tainly a merciful God is moſt earneſt with us to return, 'when he doubles and triples his invitation in the ſame chap-'ter,' "return, return, return, O backſliding children;" and when he ſaith ſo to theſe, who have moſt deeply revolted;

Isa. xxxi. 6. Surely an ingenious heart will melt in
and cry out, as Saul to David, though he was a man o
hard heart and rugged nature, 1 Sam. xxiv. 16, 17
wept and lift up his voice, 'Thou art more righteous
'thou hast rewarded me good,' &c. It affects the most hard hearted person, and makes a very rugged nature to relent, to think we have been injurious to the most kind and obliging friend. But much more it will affect a believer's heart to think, 'Have I done all this against a gracious Father that 'still pities and provides for me? All this against the special 'offers of his love, and the precious blood of his dear Son? 'All this against the yearning bowels of his mercy, and yet 'my heart so little moved?" "Father, I have sinned against "heaven and before thee; I am no more worthy to be called "thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants." Let us take this course, and we may expect our Father's heart will melt, the fatted calf will be killed, and the best robe brought out, and unworthy we, made welcome again to his table.

Q. *But how shall these return, or have any confidence to come to this table again, who have sinned against light and conscience, relapsed into the same sins after vows, sinning with deliberation, &c. Surely these are not the spots of God's children?*

A. 1. These indeed are very heinous aggravations of sin, and call for great mourning and humiliation before God.

2*dly*, I know no sin that believers are absolutely secured against falling into, except that which is unto death.

3*dly*, It is not the way to pay our debt; or get free of heinous sin, to sink and despond without casting our eyes about us, and inquiring for a fund from whence they may be answered.

4*thly*, We are assured by the faithful word of God, that there is a remedy provided for all sin, the greatest as well as the smallest; and that never any was put back, that came to it for relief, 1 John i. 7. Isa. lv. 1. John vi. 37. Let us also view the forecited promises made to backsliders of all sorts.

5*thly*, Let us see, if we can say, that our repentance, resolutions, and carefulness do gradually increase; as our guilt is renewed or heightened. It is not so with unrenewed men, for as their sin increaseth, their conviction and repentance decreaseth.

6*thly*, The greater our debts be, they lay the greater obli

gation upon us to haſten to the rich treaſure of God's pardoning grace, and put a ſpecial argument in our mouths to plead for it, Pſal. xxv. 11. 'Pardon mine iniquity, for it is great.'

Q. *But is there any hope of pardon for wilful ſinning, when it is expreſsly ſaid,* Heb. x. 26. If we ſin wilfully, after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more ſacrifice for ſin?

A. 1. That place is not to be underſtood of every wilful ſin; but of a total renouncing and rejecting of Chriſt by infidelity and apoſtacy, after we have known his truth, and been convinced that he is the only Saviour; which wilful ſinning includes in it deſpight and malice againſt Chriſt, and is attended with final-impenitency.

2*dly*, Though every degree of wilfulneſs, and croſſing of light, be a grievous aggravation of ſinning, and calls us to be humbled to the duſt; yet we ought not to deſpond as if there were no hope: for none ſin more againſt light, than ſometimes the godly have done, ſuch as David, Solomon and Peter, (who were clearly illuminated, and knew more of the evil of ſin, and more of the will of God than others about them) and yet they obtained pardon for their ſins ſo heinouſly aggravated: and the ſame may we firmly expect for ours, if we be humbled for them, and fly ſpeedily to the blood of ſprinkling, reſolving in Chriſt's ſtrength, againſt theſe and all other ſins for the future.

Q. *What is incumbent upon communicants after they have diſcovered their ſins, with their ſeveral aggravations, by ſelf-examination?*

A. They ought to draw up a catalogue of them, as it were, and go humbly therewith to God in Chriſt, with ropes about their necks, ſorrow in their hearts, tears in their eyes, and confeſſions in their mouths, and ingeniouſly ſpread it out before him, crying for mercy and looking for pardon through the 'blood of Chriſt that cleanſeth from all ſin.' They ought to lay hold on Chriſt and the promiſes by faith, renew covenant with God in him, and turn from all their ſins to the ways of holineſs, Iſa. lv. 7. Joel ii. 12. Matth. xi. 28. Iſa. lvi. 4.

Concerning the examination of our WANTS and NECESSITIES.

Queſt. *HOW are we to examine our wants and neceſſities, before our approaching to the Lord's table?*

A. We ought ſeriouſly to conſider and inquire into all the defects and needs of our ſouls, and labour to have a lively and particular ſenſe of them upon our ſpirits, and come to Chriſt in this ordinance, as our head of influences, fountain of ſupplies, and treaſure of grace, for the ſupply of all our wants, the redreſs of all our grievances, and anſwering all our complaints.

Q. *What are theſe particular wants and needs of our ſouls, that we are ſpecially to inquire into, at ſuch a time?*

A. As they are many, ſo we muſt be at great pains to find them out, and therefore we are to inquire particularly into the maladies of our ſouls, and the defects of our graces; and what are the reinforcements and ſupplies we mainly ſtand in need of. Let us aſk ourſelves: Do we need more faith, wiſdom, ſincerity, ſelf-denial, meekneſs, patience, humility and brokenneſs of heart? Do we need a reviving to our languiſhing repentance, declining love, weak faith, ſtaggering hope and faint deſires? Do we need food for our hungry ſouls, white raiment for our nakedneſs, eye-ſalve for our blindneſs, enlargement for our ſtraitnings, looſing for our bonds, eaſe for our burdens, reſolving to our doubts, peace to our troubled conſcience, cordials for our faintings, comfort againſt our fears, ſtrength for our feeble knees to enable us for our ſpiritual journey, and plaiſters for our manifold ſores? Do we need cures for our darkneſs and ignorance, our hardneſs and impenitency, our unbelief and hypocriſy, our deadneſs and formality, our inconſtancy and backſlidings, our heart-wanderings and wearying in duty? Do we need a ſight of our intereſt in Chriſt, a ſeal of our pardon, clear evidences of grace, a view of the King's face, and of the promiſed land? Do we want returns to our prayers, ſupply of bodily neceſſities, relief under bodily diſtreſſes, ſupport under heavy afflictions, patience and ſubmiſſion under loſſes, ſtrength to reſiſt temptations, preparation for ſufferings and trials, grace to vanquiſh luſts, or deliverance from atheiſtical and blaſphemous thoughts?

Theſe and many others of our wants, griefs and burdens, we ought particularly to examine, and inquire into before we approach to the Lord's ſupper.

Q. *What is the neceſſity of our examining our wants and neceſſities ſo particularly, before ſuch an ordinance?*

A. Becauſe it is the duty and intereſt of communicants to come with all their grievances to Chriſt in this ordinance; ſeeing here they have freely offered and exhibited to them all needful and ſuitable ſupplies treaſured up in Chriſt's fulneſs. In this ordinance Chriſt ſets himſelf upon a throne of grace, with a ſceptre of mercy in his hand, and graciouſly waits to hear his people's complaints and petitions, ſaying to the believer, as Ahaſuerus to Eſther at the banquet of wine, 'What 'is thy petition, and what is thy requeſt; and it ſhall be 'granted to thee?' Eſth. v. 6. And as he ſaid to the blind men, 'What will ye that I ſhall do unto you?' Matth. xx. 32. Now without a due ſenſe of our wants and neceſſities, we cannot make particular requeſts to Chriſt, nor can we look for any benefit from this feaſt, which is only provided for the hungry and ſenſible ſoul, Luke iv. 53. Pſal. ix. 18. Iſa. xliv. 3. Matth. ix. 12.

Concerning the Examination of our ENDS and DESIGNS.

Queſt. *HOW are we to examine our ends and deſigns, in approaching to the Lord's table?*

A. I have before ſhewed particularly what are the ends and uſes of the Lord's ſupper; we ought then to conſider them before our approach, and aſk our conſciences in the ſight of God, if theſe indeed be the ends, which we purpoſe and ſet before us in this ſolemn work; and ſee if we can appeal to the Searcher of hearts that it is not to pleaſe men, or to get ourſelves a name, or for any ſuch by-end, that we go to this holy table; but to obey the charge of our dying Saviour, to ſhew forth his death: renew and ſeal our covenant with God in him, get nearneſs and communion with him, nouriſhment to our ſouls, and ſupply to our manifold wants.

Q. *Why ſhould we ſo particularly examine our ends and deſigns before we come to the Lord's table?*

A. 1. Becauſe an all-ſeeing God looks eſpecially to our ends and deſigns in our ſpiritual performances, and ſo muſt we. He noticeth people's ends in faſting, Zech. vii. 5. 'Did ye 'at all faſt unto me, even unto me?' Chriſt inquired into the people's ends in going out to hear John, Matth. xi. 7. 'What went ye out for to ſee?' And more eſpecially will he notice our ends in going to his holy table, about which he hath given us ſuch ſtrict charge, 1 Cor. xi. 28, 29.

2*dly*, Becauſe wrong ends will make the beſt actions abominable in the ſight of God. Hence it was that he abhorred Jehu's zeal, the Jews ſacrifice, and the Phariſees alms-deeds and good works, Hoſ. i. 4. Iſaiah i. 13. Matth. vi. 1, 2. Matth. xxiii. 5.

3*dly*, Becauſe right and pure ends in this ordinance will excite us to preparation for it, beget reverence in us when we attend it, and awaken deſires after the bleſſings which are here offered and exhibited.

Concerning the examination of our GRACES and QUALIFICATIONS.

Queſt. *OUGHT all who come to the Lord's table, to have ſaving grace, as neceſſary to qualify them for it?*

A. Yes; for without ſaving grace in the heart, we are incapable of holding communion with God, or of putting forth theſe acts of faith, love, and repentance which are neceſſary in partaking of this ſacrament, Matth. vi. 16, 17, 18.

Q. *What is ſaving grace?*

A. It is a principle of ſpiritual life, purchaſed by Chriſt, and wrought in the ſouls of God's elect by the Holy Spirit, and ordinarily by the miniſtry of the word; whereby they are inclined and ſtrengthened ſincerely to think, act, and do theſe things which God requires, and are well-pleaſing to him, Eph. iv. 18. Heb. xiii. 12. Rom. xv. 16. John xvii. 17. Heb. xii. 28.

Q. *By what evidences may we know if we have ſaving grace?*

A. By theſe formerly given, concerning a ſaving change and the new heart, which may briefly be ſummed up in theſe two. 1. Saving grace turns the heart not only from ſin, but againſt ſin; ſo that the ſoul do ſincerely hate it and ſeek its deſtruction both in heart and life, Ezek. xviii. 30, 31. Pſal. cxix. 104. Gal. v. 24.

2*dly*, Saving grace turns the heart to God and godlineſs, and makes the ſoul willing and inclinable to do theſe things that are acceptable to God, cheerfully to obey the will of his precepts, and patiently to ſubmit to the will of his providences, Iſa. lv. 7. Pſal. cxix. 112. Iſa. lvi. 4. Job i. 21. Acts xxi. 13, 14.

Q. *Can no hypocrite attain to ſaving grace?*

A. No; for though ſome hypocrites have reformed their lives and gone a great length in religious performances, and have attained to ſeveral qualifications which reſemble true grace, yet none but believers attain to real and ſaving grace.

Q. *How far may ſome hypocrites go in religion, and yet fall ſhort of grace?*

A. 1. They may attain to great gifts and knowledge in divine things; ſo did Balaam and Judas.

2*dly*, They may have a great profeſſion and outward ſhew of godlineſs; ſo had the fooliſh virgins, and the people of Sardis.

3*dly*, Their conſciences may be awakened for ſin, and they may tremble for fear of God's wrath; ſo was it with Judas and Felix.

4*thly*, They may confeſs ſin, and expreſs much ſorrow for it; ſo did Ahab, Judas, and many of the Iſraelites, Exod. xxxiii. 4. Numb. xiv. 39, 43. 1 Sam. vii. 3, 5.

5*thly*, They may leave off groſs ſins, and ſet about a great reformation of their lives; ſo did Herod and the Phariſees.

6*thly*, They may believe the truths and doctrine of Chriſt; ſo did Agrippa, and many of the Jews, John ii. 23. Acts xxvi. 27.

7*thly*, They may ſhew much zeal for theſe truths, both by promoting them, and ſuffering for them; ſo did Judas and many others, 1 Cor. xiii. 3. Phil. i. 15, 16, 18.

8*thly*, They may ſhew much love to miniſters, and the ordinances diſpenſed by them; ſo did Herod with reſpect to John, and the Jews with reſpect to Ezekiel, Mark vi. 20. Ezek. xxxiii. 31, 32.

Nay, there is no grace or quality in true believers, but hypocrites may attain to ſomething like it. They may have a ſort of faith, repentance, love, delight, joy, deſire, zeal, fear, mortification, contempt of the world, &c.

Q. *How may we diſtinguiſh betwixt true grace in believers, and the counterfeit grace that may be in hypocrites?*

A. 1. In believers, the nature and heart is renewed; but in hypocrites, nature is but refined, for the old heart ſtill remains.

2*dly*, True grace is ſituate mainly in the heart and affections; but the hypocrites goodneſs is mainly in their external actions and deportment.

3*dly*, True grace is an immortal principle that abides conſtantly in the ſoul; but the hypocrites goodneſs is like the 'morning cloud and early dew, that evaniſheth away.'

4*thly*, True grace carries the believer a further length in religion, than the hypocrites goodneſs can do even to renounce ſelf; love God above all things, and hate every thing that is contrary to him.

Q. *What are theſe attainments in graces and religion, that hypocrites cannot arrive to?*

A. Whatever length they may go in religion, or change be made upon them; yet they can never attain to theſe things, that are peculiar to the truly gracious.

As 1. Hypocrites can never attain to pure ends in their actings and performances; they never aim ſingly at God's glory, Chriſt's honour and the good of ſouls: but ſtill they deſire to be ſeen of men. Their chief end is to get a reward either from God or man, or to evite trouble, either in their bodies or conſciences here or hereafter.

2*dly*, They can never apprehend Chriſt as altogether lovely, and the only ſatisfying good in the world, and be willing to part with all for him. For there is ſtill ſomething with them that they love better, and prefer before Jeſus Chriſt.

3*dly*, Hypocrites can never win the length to be truly grieved for in-dwelling ſin, heart-plagues, and theſe ſecret evils that would never turn to their ſhame before the world.

4*thly*, They can never win to have an univerſal reſpect to all God's known commands, and to be as zealous for ſecret duties, as for theſe that are public.

5*thly*, They never attain to renounce all their own doings, as filthy rags, and go beyond all things in themſelves to

Chriſt and his righteouſneſs, deſiring only to be found in him.

6thly, Hypocrites go not the length of being reſtleſs and unſatisfied, if they find not God's preſence, and communion with him in duties. They are eaſy, if they acquit themſelves therein to the approbation of men, or a natural conſcience, although they want the approbation and countenance of God.

Q. *Is it not an eſſential property of true grace, where it is, for to grow?*

A. Yes; becauſe, 1. Grace is the ſeed of God, 1 John iii. 9. And it is natural for ſeed to grow.

2dly, Becauſe of the union of the gracious ſoul with Chriſt the head. All believers are branches ingrafted into this true vine, and therefore muſt grow, John xv. 5.

3dly, Becauſe God hath appointed it, that hereby believers by degrees may be made meet for heaven, and ripened to be tranſplanted to the new Jeruſalem, Col. i. 12. Prov. iv. 18.

Q. *How may we know whether we grow in grace or not?*

A. By theſe marks our growth may be diſcerned.

1. If we be growing downward in humility, and be ſtill more vile in our own eyes, 1 Pet. v. 5.

2dly, If we be growing upward in heavenly-mindedneſs, and the world have ſtill the leſs room in our hearts, Heb. xi. 13.

3dly, If our appetites after ſpiritual food be increaſing, 1 Pet. ii. 2.

4thly, If our conſciences be growing more tender and watchful againſt ſin: and if we notice the firſt riſing of ſin in the heart, and avoid all temptations to it, Gen. xxxix. 9, 10.

5thly, If we take more delight in ſpiritual exerciſes, prayer, praiſe and meditation: or in theſe duties that are diſpleaſing to the fleſh, ſuch as mortification, ſelf-examination, mourning for ſin, ſelf-denial, &c.

6thly, If we be more concerned for the glory of God, the intereſt of Chriſt's kingdom, and the good of precious ſouls.

7thly, If we can truſt in God, when outward and viſible helps do fail. Heb. ii. 17, 18.

Q. *Shall we conclude theſe to have no true grace, who complain that grace is ſo far from growing in them, that they are ſenſible of a ſad decay in it?*

A. No; for, 1. Believers do not grow at all times, they have not only their ſpring-time, but alſo their winter-ſeaſons,

when their leaves do wither through ſome prevailing temptation, and they ſeem to be on the decaying hand; for we ſee the church of Epheſus is charged with falling from her firſt love, and yet a golden candleſtick ſtill, Rev. ii. 4, 5.

2dly, Believers may miſtake about their growth; they may judge their grace grown weaker when really it is not, when only the ſenſe of their corruptions is grown ſtronger, their temptations increaſe, or comforts are withdrawn; and yet in the mean time grace may be in its vigour. Alſo the earneſt thirſtings of ſome after grace, may occaſion them not to notice what they have.

3dly, It is with the growth of grace, as with the motion of the ſun, or the growth of plants, which we perceive better a while afterwards, than in the mean time of it, Mark iv. 26, 27.

Q. *What are theſe ſacramental graces or qualifications, which we ſhould eſpecially inquire after, and examine into, before our partaking of the Lord's ſupper?*

A. There are theſe eight, viz. Knowledge, faith, repentance, fear, love, thankfulneſs, holy deſires, and new obedience; all of them neceſſary to fit us for a worthy partaking of this ordinance.

I. Concerning KNOWLEDGE.

Queſt. *WHY is knowledge ſo neceſſary for worthy partaking?*

A. 1. Becauſe without knowledge, we cannot 'diſcern 'the Lord's body,' which is abſolutely neceſſary to be done in order to eſcape God's judgments, which are denounced againſt theſe who do it not, 1 Cor. xi. 29.

2dly, Without knowledge we are not capable to examine ourſelves, which is indiſpenſibly requiſite before partaking, 1 Cor. xi. 28.

3dly, Without it we cannot repent: for how can we repent of ſin, till we know the evil and dangerous conſequences of it?

4thly, Without knowledge we cannot receive Chriſt in the ſacrament, for how can we cloſe with Chriſt, till we know

our wants and our need of Chriſt, together with Chriſt's fulneſs and fitneſs for us.

5thly, This is a ſeaſt appointed for believers the friends of Chriſt, but ignorant perſons are unbelievers, and enemies to Chriſt, they are under the power of Satan, and held by him in the chains of darkneſs; they are under the power of reigning ſin; for ignorance itſelf is a great ſin, and the root of many others, Eph. iv. 18, 19. Hoſ. iv. 1, 2. 1 Pet. i. 14.

Q. *What is to be underſtood by diſcerning the Lord's body in the ſacrament?*

A. 1. Our putting a difference betwixt the conſecrated elements, and common bread and wine; looking upon them as a ſacred repreſentation of Chriſt's body and blood, and a ſeal of the covenant of grace to all worthy partakers.

2dly, Our making a ſolemn difference betwixt the body and blood of Chriſt, and that of a mere man; for it is the body of the Lord, even of him who is Jehovah.

3dly, Our looking through the elements to a bleeding Saviour, as offering up himſelf a ſacrifice to atone divine juſtice for us, and diſcerning him as really preſent in the ſacrament, exhibiting, offering, and actually beſtowing himſelf with the benefits of his death, to worthy communicants.

4thly, Our having ſome diſtinct views of Chriſt's ſufferings, in the cauſe of them, the greatneſs of them, the neceſſity, value and ſufficiency of them; together with their great and glorious effects.

5thly, Our beholding a dying Saviour with ſuitable affections. We muſt diſcern him in the ſacrament, ſo as to prize and eſteem him highly; we muſt diſcern him, ſo as to wonder at his free love, and admire his condeſcendency. We muſt diſcern him, ſo as to look to him only for pardon and ſalvation, yield our hearts to him, hate and abandon ſin that pierced him, and follow the Lamb wherever he goes.

Q. *What is that knowledge, which is needful and competent for worthy communicants?*

A. 1. We muſt know God in his nature and eſſential perfections, and eſpecially theſe attributes that ſhine moſt brightly in the ſufferings of Chriſt, ſuch as, the wiſdom, goodneſs, holineſs and juſtice of God. Alſo we muſt know God in his perſons, that there is one God in three diſtinct perſons, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt; and theſe three

are one, and the ſame in eſſence. And that this God created the world by his power, and ruleth it by his providence.

2dly, We muſt know the fall of Adam, with the ſad fruits of it on all his poſterity. We muſt know what an happy ſtate man was in before the fall, and what a ſinful and miſerable condition he is in now, of which I ſpoke before.

3dly, We muſt know where our help and remedy is to be found, viz. in Jeſus Chriſt our only Saviour. We muſt know what Chriſt is, in his two natures, God and man. In his three offices, of Prophet, Prieſt, and King. We muſt know Chriſt in his commiſſion, that he was ſent of God; in his deſign in coming to the world, which was to redeem the elect: in the manner of his effecting our redemption, by his obedience and ſufferings: the manner of applying it, by his interceſſion in heaven, and his Spirit on earth. We muſt know the nature and neceſſity of faith in order to our getting an intereſt in what Chriſt hath done and ſuffered: and the neceſſity of regeneration, and a ſaving change in order to our being happy. We muſt know the value and merit of Chriſt's ſufferings, and the efficacy of his blood: that there is no juſtification but by his righteouſneſs, and no ſanctification but by his Spirit.

4thly, We muſt know the nature, ends, and uſes of the Lord's ſupper; what is repreſented by the bread and wine, and what we are to do at the communion-table.

Q. *What kind of knowledge is it, that communicants ought to have of theſe things?*

A. 1. Not a literal or head knowledge only, not ſuch a knowledge as a parrot hath, that may be taught to repeat the Creed, without reaſon or ſenſe to underſtand or believe one word it ſpeaketh. But, *2dly*, It muſt be a rational, heart-affecting, and ſaving knowledge, that we muſt have of divine truths.

Q. *What are the marks of this ſaving knowledge?*

A. The ſaving knowledge which believers have, and no hypocrites nor natural men can attain to, hath theſe characters.

1. It is a convincing and experimental knowledge; the ſoul firmly aſſents to, and feels the truth of what it knoweth, and ſaith of our Saviour's coming, with Paul, 'This is 'faithful ſaying, and worthy of all acceptation,' &c. 1 Ti. i. 15. There is as great a difference betwixt a natural ma

and a believer's knowledge, as betwixt the knowledge in a naturalist and an Israelite concerning Manna: the one, by reading and study, knows more of the nature and effects of it; but the other by tasting and feeding on it, knew it more feelingly and satisfyingly. So believers know Christ and his truths, convincingly and experimentally, Psal. xxxiv. 8. 1 Pet. ii. 3.

2*dly*, It is a Christ-exalting and self-abasing knowledge, it makes the soul to value Christ at a high rate, and count all the glory of the world as loss and dung besides him. It lets us see that Christ is glorious, but we are vile: that Christ is full, but we are empty: that he is rich, but we are poor and naked, Phil. iii. 8, 9.

3*dly*, It is a fiducial knowledge, it induceth the heart to trust in God's mercy and power, and to accept of his Son Jesus Christ, as the only way to the Father, Psal. ix. 10. John vi. 40, 45.

4*thly*, It is a quickening and efficacious knowledge, it warms the heart, transforms the soul, and reforms the life. As light and heat are inseparable, so divine light in the mind, conveys a heat into the affections. It inflames the heart with love to Christ, and a desire to be like him; it determines the will to comply with duty, to avoid sin: it spurs on the soul to live up to its light, to be active in God's service, and run the way of his commands, 2 Cor. iii. 18. James iii. 17.

Q. *Whence is it that believers get this saving knowledge?*

A. From Jesus Christ, the great Prophet and teacher of his church, who instructs them by his Spirit, as well as by his word: there is none that teacheth like him, for he both gives light, and eyes to see the light; he not only opens the scriptures to his people, but he also opens their understandings to receive the truths, Job xxxvi. 22. Isa. xlii. 6, 7. Luke xxiv. 32, 45. Jer. xxiv. 7.

Q. *Have not communicants who are taught this saving knowledge, other thoughts and uptakings of divine things than natural men have?*

A. Yes; their thoughts and uptakings of these things are far different, 1 Cor. ii. 14. 1 Cor. i. 23, 24.

Q. *What thoughts and uptakings have they of the covenant of grace, which is sealed in this sacrament?*

A. That it is everlasting, well ordered in all things, and

ſure; and therefore they do cheerfully conſent to it, and venture their ſouls upon it, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5.

Q. *What do they think of Chriſt crucified, who is here ſet before their eyes?*

A. That he is a moſt glorious, well qualified, and all-ſufficient Saviour, 'able to ſave to the uttermoſt all that come to God by him,' Heb. vii. 25.

Q. *What thoughts have they of ſin that pierced him?*

A. That it is the murderer of Chriſt, and the worſt of evils, which therefore they will conſtantly abhor, Zech. xii. 10. Rom. xii. 9.

Q. *What do they think of Chriſt's way, viz. holineſs?*

A. That it is both pleaſant and advantageous, and therefore they will love it, and walk in it, Prov. iii. 17. Pſal. xix. 11. Pſal. cxix. 47, 48.

Q. *What thoughts have they of Chriſt's people?*

A. That they are the 'excellent ones of the earth,' and the moſt deſirable company in it, however they be deſpiſed by the world, Pſal. xvi. 3. Pſal. cxix. 63.

Q. *What do they think of Chriſt's day?*

A. That it is the choiceſt day of the week, holy, honourable, bleſſed and enriching, being Chriſt's weekly market-day for our ſouls, Iſa. lviii. 13, 14.

Q. *What do they think of his word and ordinances?*

A. That they are food to their ſouls, cordials to their hearts, a lamp to their feet, and a light to their paths, Pſalm cxix. 50, 103, 105.

Q. *What do they think of the Lord's ſupper?*

A. That it is Chriſt's banqueting-houſe, and a rare feaſt for the ſoul, which he hath in love, provided for his people in the wilderneſs, Cant. ii. 4. Iſa. xxv. 6. 1 Cor. v. 8.

Q. *What do they think of this world?*

A. That it is a ſtrange country, the place of their pilgrimage, and that all in it, is vanity and vexation of ſpirit, Heb. xi. 13. Pſal. cxix. 54. Eccl. i. 14.

Q. *What do they think of the other world above?*

A. That it is their country and their home, and the things of it are real, great, eternal, and very near, Heb. xi. 16. 2 Cor. v. 1. 1 Cor. ii. 9. 2 Cor. iv. 18.

II. Concerning FAITH.

Queſt. *WHAT ſort of faith is it, that worthy communicants ought to have?*

A. Not a temporary faith, or a faith of miracles, nor a hiſtorical faith only, but a ſaving and juſtifying faith.

Q. *What is a hiſtorical faith?*

A. It is the aſſent of the underſtanding unto the truths of Chriſt revealed in the goſpel, whereby a man believes and gives credit to theſe truths as certain and true. This is not ſaving faith itſelf, but it is abſolutely neceſſary to it, as the foundation to the ſuperſtructure, and an excellent help to promote it; for the ſtronger our aſſent is to divine truths, the more lively will our ſaving faith be. The more ſtrongly we believe Chriſt's ability and ſufficiency for the office of Mediator, the more are we helped to rely on him as our Mediator. Now though ſaving faith can never be without this aſſent or hiſtorical faith; yet hiſtorical faith may be, where ſaving faith is not, as is plain from John ii. 23. Acts viii. 13. James ii. 19.

Q. *What is ſaving faith?*

A. It is a grace, or ſpecial gift of God to his elect, wrought in their hearts by the Spirit and word of God; whereby they being convinced of ſin and miſery, and of their own inability to recover themſelves out of their loſt eſtate, do not only aſſent to the truth of God's record concerning Chriſt in his word, but alſo receive and reſt upon Chriſt and his righteouſneſs, for pardon of ſin, and ſalvation, according as he is offered in the goſpel, Eph. i. 19. Eph. ii. 8. Acts xvi. 30. 1 John v. 10, 11. John i. 12. Eph. i. 12, 13. Acts x. 43. Phil. iii. 9.

Q. *What is the particular act of faith, that is the mean of our juſtification before God?*

A. It is not our knowledge, nor the mere aſſent of the underſtanding to ſcripture-truths, that juſtifies us; but it is the receiving and reſting upon Chriſt, as a Prieſt offering up himſelf a ſacrifice to juſtice, and making ſatisfaction for our ſins.

Q. *What are the words and phraſes, whereby the Holy Ghoſt in ſcripture, doth expreſs juſtifying faith?*

A. It is ſometimes expreſt, 1. By coming unto Chriſt, John vi. 35.

2*dly*, By flying to Chriſt for refuge, Heb. vi. 18.
3*dly*, By caſting our burdens on him, Pſal. lv. 23.
4*thly*, By leaning on him, Cant. viii. 5.
5*thly*, By ſtaying ourſelves on him, Iſa. l. 10.
6*thly*, By looking unto Chriſt, Iſa. xiv. 22.
7*thly*, By taking hold of Chriſt, Iſa. xxvii. 5.
8*thly*, By receiving of Chriſt, John i. 12.
9*thly*, By cleaving to him, Acts xi. 23.
10*thly*, By putting on Chriſt, Rom. xiii. 14.
11*thly*, By hungering and thirſting after him, Matth. v. 6.
12*thly*, By eating and drinking, John vi. 53.
13*thly*, By embracing the promiſes, Heb. xi. 13.
14*thly*, By truſting in Chriſt, Eph. i. 12. 13.
15*thly*, By ſeeking of Chriſt, Iſa. lv. 6.
16*thly*, By running after Chriſt, Cant. i. 4. and running to Chriſt, Iſa. lv. 5.

Q. *Why is faith ſo neceſſary to worthy communicating?*

A. It is impoſſible to pleaſe God in any duty without faith, and far leſs in this, where it is ſo highly neceſſary, and ſo much to be exerciſed. What can we do at the Lord's table without faith? Seeing faith is the ſoul's eye that ſees Chriſt in this ordinance. It is the hand that takes hold of Chriſt, and the arm that embraces him. It is the ſpiritual mouth and ſtomach that feeds on Chriſt. It is the bond of our union with Chriſt; it brings us into Chriſt's family, and makes us his children. And laſtly, it is the ſpring that moves all the other graces, and ſets them on work: and therefore it is highly neceſſary at this ordinance, Heb. xi. 6. John xvi. 31. Heb. x. 22.

Q. *What is implied in that ſaving act of faith, the ſoul's receiving and reſting on Chriſt as exhibited in the ſacrament?*

A. It imports theſe things, 1. A lively ſenſe of the ſoul's miſery and danger without Chriſt.

2*dly*, A rejecting all other dependencies and ſupports, beſides Chriſt, Hoſ. xv. 3.

3*dly*, A fixed reſolution to look ſtill to Chriſt, wait on him, and humbly ſubmit to any thing for mercy; like Job, and the woman of Canaan, Job. xiii. 15. Matth. xv. 23, 25, 27.

4*thly*, A hearty conſent of the ſoul to the covenant of grace, and God's offer of ſalvation through Chriſt, with a cordial approbation of the goſpel way of ſalvation, and the ſoul acquieſcing in it, as moſt excellent and ſuitable.

5thly, Our actual adventuring ourſelves and our ſalvation upon a crucified Chriſt and his righteouſneſs: caſting our periſhing ſouls into the bleeding arms of our high-prieſt and ſurety, for ſhelter and mercy; ſaying, 'Lord, what wouldſt 'thou have me to do?' I am well content with thy perſon, and thy offices, with thy righteouſneſs and purchaſe, prieſthood and kingdom, laws and love, croſs and crown. Tho' the receiving of Chriſt as a king, be not the firſt and primary act of ſaving faith, yet it is conſequential to it, and inſeparable from it. The believer muſt cheerfully accept of Chriſt as a prince on the throne, as a prieſt upon the croſs, Zech. vi. 13. John i. 12. Heb. ii. 17. Iſa. lv. 4, 5. Iſa. xxxiii. 22. Acts v. 31. Matth. xi. 28, 29.

Q. *Why is faith ſo acceptable and well-pleaſing to God, particularly in the act of communicating?*

A. 1. Becauſe it is a grace that humbleth the creature, ſtrips it of its own worth, and excludes all boaſting in the buſineſs of our ſalvation, Rom. iii. 27.

2dly, It doth highly exalt free grace, and ſend us out of ourſelves to look for all our comfort and happineſs in the mercy of God through a Mediator, Rom. iv. 16. Eph. ii. 7, 8.

3dly, It puts the higheſt honour on God's beloved Son, approves his glorious undertaking, free love, and excellent offices. It makes Chriſt the alone ground of our juſtification and acceptance with God, and gives him all the glory of our ſalvation; which is moſt acceptable to God, 1 Pet. ii. 7. Matth. xvii. 5. 1 John iii. 23.

4thly, It is the grace that unites the ſoul to Chriſt, makes it one with him, and clothes it with the white robe of his righteouſneſs; upon which account God delights in believers, and ſees no iniquity in them, Phil. iii. 9. John xvi. 27. Numb. xxiii. 21.

5thly, Faith is the ſpring and *primum mobile* of all the reſt of the ſacramental graces, love, repentance, thankfulneſs, holy deſires, and new obedience. It doth excite them, afford matter to them, and ſet them all a-work, Lam. v. 2, 3, 4. 2 Pet. i. 5.

Q. *How is ſaving faith wrought in the ſoul?*

A. By the Spirit of God, who doth it by theſe two means.

1*ſt*, He prepares the ſoul for faith, by the miniſtry of the law, for thereby he diſcovers the evil and guilt of ſin,

and the dreadful wrath that is due for it. He humbles the ſoul for ſin, makes it deſpair of relief from the creature, and convinceth it of its need of a Mediator, John xvi. 8. Rom. iii. 20. Acts iv. 12. Matth. ix. 12.

2*dly*, The Holy Spirit works faith in the ſoul by the miniſtry of the goſpel. For thereby he diſcovers the ability and fulneſs of an offered Saviour, and the neceſſity and excellency of faith. He begets in the ſoul an high eſteem of Chriſt, thirſting deſires for him, and ſome hope of reliefs by him. He takes the ſoul wholly off from depending on its own righteouſneſs, and makes it reſolve to uſe all means to find Chriſt, fall down at his feet, and lay the whole ſtreſs of its ſalvation upon him alone, 1 Tim. i. 15. John iii. 16. 1 John iii. 23. Cant. iii. 2. Cant. v. 10. Phil. iii. 9.

Q. *By what marks may we examine ourſelves if we have true ſaving faith?*

A. By the deſcription, which is given before of its nature, and the manner how it is wrought. Beſides which, we may take theſe other marks.

1. True faith makes Chriſt exceeding precious to the ſoul in all his offices as a prophet, prieſt, and king; and determines the ſoul to embrace him wholly and undividedly, and ſet him up as an abſolute Lord over all its intereſts and concerns whatſomever, 1 Pet. ii. 7. Iſaiah lv. 4, 5.

2*dly*, It is attended with true repentance, for it ſoftens the heart and makes it bleed for ſin that pierced Chriſt: and engages the ſoul to crucify ſin, purſue it as Chriſt's enemy, and part with every beloved luſt, Acts xx. 21. Mark i. 15. Zech. xii 10. Iſa. liii. 5. 6.

3*dly*, It makes a man very humble, and dead to his own will, wiſdom, credit, eaſe and worldly enjoyments, and eſpecially to ſelf-righteouſneſs. It makes the ſoul content and willing to be ſaved by Chriſt in his own way, without joining any thing with him, to rob him of the glory of its ſalvation, Matth. xvi. 24. Phil. iii. 9. 1 Cor. i. 30, 31.

4*thly*, It inclines us to aim at Chriſt's honour in all our actions, whether we pray, read, hear, or communicate; yea, even when we eat, drink, buy, or ſell, 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. 1 Cor. x. 31.

5*thly*, It is attended with obedience to the will of God,

and fruitfulneſs in good works, and makes the ſoul willing to ſerve Chriſt, as well as to be ſaved by him, Rom. xvi. 26. James ii. 17, 18. Col. iii. 24.

6thly, It works by love, and makes the believer do all duties from a principle of love, and carries out the heart to love God for ſending Chriſt into the world, and to love every thing that bears Chriſt's image. And ſo ſincere is his love, that it prompts him to duty and keeps him back from ſin, much more than the law, or fear of hell doth, Gal. v. 6.

7thly, It not only reforms the life from the practice of ſin, but purifies the heart from the love of ſin, by arguing againſt it from the word, and applying the blood of Chriſt to the ſoul, Acts xv. 9. John xvii. 17. Zech. xiii. 1.

8thly, True faith inclines and encourages the ſoul to draw near unto God in prayer, for the accompliſhment of theſe things it relies on Chriſt for, Heb. iv. 16. Rom. x. 12, 13, 14. Pſal. cxviii. 25, 26.

Q. *What ſhall theſe poor diſcouraged ſouls do, who have been examining their faith, but are not able to lay claim to theſe marks and ſtill fear they have no true faith? Can ſuch adventure to come to this ordinance, where faith is ſo abſolutely neceſſary?*

A. I. Faith indeed is abſolutely neceſſary at the Lord's table, but it is not abſolutely neceſſary that we ſhould know it. Aſſurance is not eſſential to faith, for there may be true faith wrought in the ſouls of ſome, who yet do not perceive it. The miſts of guilt, Satan's temptations, and their own fear, may ſo riſe up and obſcure their knowing faculty, that they cannot ſee 'the things that are freely given to them of God,' 1 Cor. ii. 12.

II. There is ſome faith ſo weak and ſmall, that it can ſcarcely be diſcerned by us, which yet may be real, ſincere, and acceptable before God. And this is expreſſed in the leſſer degrees and workings of faith, which yet are true faith; ſuch as theſe,

1. A total renouncing of our own righteouſneſs, with a reſolution never to depend upon any thing in ourſelves, or any other, beſides Chriſt, Hoſ. xiv. 3.

2dly, A good opinion, and eſteem of Chriſt, with a perſuaſion of his power, fulneſs and ſuitableneſs to our miſerable circumſtances. This was all that the leper, and woman with the bloody iſſue had, when they firſt came to Chriſt, Matth. viii. 2 Matth. ix. 21.

3*dly*, An earneſt deſire, or a hunger and thirſt after Chriſt and his righteouſneſs, Pſalm xliii. 1. Matth. v. 6.

4*thly*, A willingneſs to be the Lord's, and wholly reſigned to him, to be managed and diſpoſed of, as he pleaſeth, Pſal. cxix. 94.

5*thly*, A deep and heart-affecting ſenſe of that grievous clog of unbelief, that hinders the ſoul's motion toward Chriſt, Mark ix. 24.

6*thly*, A ſerious reſolve and mint of the ſoul to go out to Chriſt, throw itſelf at his feet, and die at his door, though he ſhould not have mercy. Now theſe deſires, motions and workings of the heart, in a ſenſible ſinner, are ſome degrees of true faith which God will not deſpiſe, Neh. i. 11. Mark ix. 24, 25. John xiii. 15. Matth. xii. 20.

III. Seeing Chriſt is a moſt tender-hearted and compaſſionate Saviour, that will not 'break the bruiſed reed, nor quench 'the ſmoaking flax;' but is content to accept of thoſe that come to him with a weak and trembling hand: ſuch weak and doubting believers ought certainly to come to Chriſt in the ſacrament, where he ſeats himſelf on a throne of mercy to wait for needy ſinners, and hath graciouſly appointed this ordinance, for ſtrengthening and increaſing weak faith.

IV. Such weak and diſcouraged ſouls ſhould narrowly watch the ſeaſons of God's near approaches in the ordinances, and theſe ſpecial golden minutes, when the Spirit ſtrives, the Father draws, bowels of mercy yearn, and heaven's gales do blow; and preſently take hold of, ſtrike in with, and improve them: as Benhadad's ſervants watched for the word *brother* from the king of Iſrael's mouth, and haſtily catched it, 1 Kings xx. 33.

Q. *Are we not utterly unworthy to receive ſuch a glorious Saviour in the arms of faith? How can we expect that he will match with ſuch vile wretches as we are?*

A. I anſwered this objection before, when treating of covenanting with God, to which the reader is referred. I only add theſe things.

1. That ſeeing this glorious Redeemer freely offers himſelf to the moſt unworthy, he ought readily, and without heſitation to be entertained by us: for though we be moſt unworthy of receiving Chriſt, yet he is moſt worthy of our acceptation, 1 Tim. i. 15.

2*dly*, This exalted Saviour thinks it no diſparagement to

ſuit his worthineſs to our unworthineſs, his riches to our poverty, his eye-ſalve to our blindneſs, his white-raiment to our nakedneſs, and his fulneſs to our emptineſs; for he ſaith to the unworthieſt ſinner that comes to him, 'All thy wants 'be on me;' and though thou haſt no beauty of thine own, yet, 'I will make thy beauty perfect through my comeli-'neſs put upon thee; and ſo the King will greatly deſire 'thy beauty,' Ezek. xvi. 14. Pſalm xlv. 10, 11.

3*dly*, Though there be a great ſhew of humility in this objection, yet there is oft no ſmall pride at the root of it. For if there be ground of objecting againſt us upon the ſcore of unworthineſs, it becomes us to let it come from Chriſt's ſide; but ſo wedded are we to the old covenant of works, that we would be at giving as good as we get or at leaſt ſomething in lieu of it. But our money and qualifications will periſh with us, if we think to buy ſuch a prize as glorious Chriſt. If we be not content to accept of Chriſt on the ſcore of infinite free grace and matchleſs condeſcending love, we can never expect to enjoy him, Iſa. lv. 1, 9. Rom. xi. 33. Eph. iii. 18, 19. Free grace is an ocean of ſuch a depth and breadth, that it never yet hath been founded or meaſured by men or angels: nay, to all eternity, it will be acknowledged, it hath neither bank nor bottom.

III. Concerning REPENTANCE.

Queſt. *SEEING repentance is another ſacramental grace, which we muſt neceſſarily examine ourſelves about; What is that repentance, which worthy partakers muſt have?*

A. True repentance, or repentance unto life, is a ſaving grace, or a ſpecial gift of God to elect ſinners, wrought in their hearts by his Spirit and word, whereby upon a due ſight and ſenſe of the danger, guilt, and odiouſneſs of their ſins; and upon a diſcovery and belief of the mercy of God in Chriſt to ſuch as are penitent; they mourn for, and hate their ſins; confeſſing them to God with ſhame and grief, and turn from them all, to God, and the ways of holineſs, both in heart and life, Zech. xii. 10. Acts xi. 18, 21. Ezek. xxiii. 30. Ezek.

xxxvi. 31. Joel ii. 12, 13. Jer xxxi. 18, 19. 2 Cor. vii. 11. Prov. xxviii. 13. 2 Kings xxiii. 25.

Q. *What are the parts of true repentance?*

A. There are theſe parts in it. 1. Conviction. 2. Diſcovery of God's mercy in Chriſt. 3. Humiliation. 4. Confeſſion. 5. Hatred of ſin. 6. Turning from ſin. 7. Turning to God and his ways.

Q. *Wherein conſiſts true conviction of ſin?*

A. In a right uptaking of the nature and evil of ſin, and a ſenſe of the wrath of God, that is due to it.

Q. *What is it in ſin, that the ſoul muſt be convinced of?*

A. We muſt be convinced of ſin; 1. In reſpect of its ſource and fountain, from whence all our actual ſins do proceed, and that is, the corrupt nature and wicked heart, Pſal. li. 5. Jer. xvii. 9. Matth. xv. 18, 19.

2*dly*, In reſpect of its intrinſic evil and malignity, that it is enmity and rebellion againſt God, Rom. viii. 7.

3*dly*, In reſpect of its pollution and deformity, that it renders us vile and loathſome in the ſight of God, Zech. xi. 8.

4*thly*, In reſpect of the number of our ſins, that they are more than our haire, Pſal. xi. 12.

5*thly*, In reſpect of the aggravation from the heinous circumſtances attending the commiſſion of them.

6*thly*, In reſpect of the guilt and demerit of them, that we have thereby forfeited all our mercies, and do deſerve everlaſting wrath.

Q. *What is the difference betwixt the convictions of natural men, and theſe of true penitents?*

A. 1. Natural mens convictions proceed only from a natural conſcience, awakened upon ſome occaſion; but thoſe of a true penitent are the ſpecial work of the Spirit of God, Exod. ix. 27. John xvi. 8.

2*dly*, Natural mens convictions are moſt unwelcome and burthenſome to them; but the true penitent is deſirous of them, Acts xxvi. 25. Job xiii. 23. Job xxxiv. 32.

3*dly*, The natural man's convictions are mainly for groſs ſins, and the out-breakings of the life; but the true penitent is alſo ſenſible of the corruption of the nature, plagues of the heart, and ſins moſt ſecret, Matth. xxvii. 4. Pſalm li. 5. Rom. vii. 24. Pſal. xix. 12.

4*thly*, Natural mens convictions proceed from the fear of hell, or temporal judgments; but theſe of the true penitent

ariſe mainly from a view of ſin's evil, God's goodneſs, his patience, or Chriſt's ſufferings, Pſal. lxxviii. 34. Luke xv. 18. Zech. xii. 10.

5thly, The one is only of ſhort continuance, but the other is abiding and durable, Hoſ. vi. 4 Pſalm li. 3.

6thly, The one is cured by natural means, but the other only by the blood of Chriſt, Acts xvi. 30, 31.

Q. *Why is the diſcovery of God's mercy in Chriſt a neceſſary ingredient to true repentance?*

A. 1. Becauſe God out of Chriſt is a conſuming fire, and ſo without a ſight of his mercy in Chriſt, we would never turn from ſin to him, but would be ready to ſink, with Judas, under tormenting deſpair, Heb. x. 41. Heb. xii. 29.

2dly, Becauſe the apprehenſion of the mercy of God in Chriſt, is a great encouragement to us to leave ſin, and a mean to affect our heart with kindly grief and godly ſorrow for ſin, Pſalm cxxx. 4. Rom. iii. 4.

Q. *Wherein conſiſts true humiliation for ſin?*

A. In theſe things, 1. In a real inward ſorrow and bleeding of heart for ſin, and the diſhonour done thereby to God, Pſal. li. 3, 4. Zech xii, 10.

2dly, In a holy ſhame and bluſhing of ſoul for ſin, in the ſight of God, Ezra ix. 6.

3dly, In the ſoul's loathing and abhorring itſelf for its unworthy carriage towards ſo gracious a God, Job xlii. 6.

4thly, In outward mourning for ſin, and bewailing it before the Lord, Pſalm xxxviii. 18.

Q. *What is the difference betwixt the humiliation of a natural man, ſuch as Ahab, and that of a true penitent?*

A. There is ſuch a difference, as betwixt the convictions of natural men and true penitents, of which I ſpoke before. I only add this; that a natural or unrenewed man's ſorrow and humiliation for ſin, is not ſo much for ſin itſelf, as for the effects and conſequences of it, as it expoſes him to temporal or eternal judgments, as it deprives him of outward mercies, blaſts his reputation, breaks his employment, brings on corporal puniſhment here, or makes him obnoxious to hell-fire hereafter. But the true penitent mourns for ſin, as it diſpleaſes and diſhonours God, wounds Chriſt, grieves his Spirit, and gratifies the devil. Alſo he grieves for it, as it defiles the ſoul, indiſpoſes for holy duties, and debars from communion with Chriſt.

Q. *What ſort of confeſſion of ſin is requiſite to true repentance?*

A. 1. It muſt be cordial and ſincere; not ſuperficial and overly, Job xiii. 6.

2*dly*, It muſt be free and voluntary, and not extorted by judgments or the fear of hell, Matth. xxvii. 4. Luke xv. 18.

3*dly*, It muſt be particular and diſtinct, ſo far as we can remember our bypaſt ſins: and not reſt in generals, Judg. x. 10. Pſalm li. 4, 14. 1 Tim. i. 13.

4*thly*, It muſt be humble and mournful, and attended with holy ſhame and ſelf-condemnation, Dan. ix. 8. Luke xviii. 13. Pſalm xxxiv 4, 18.

5*thly*, It muſt be attended with preſent forſaking of ſin, Prov. xxviii. 13.

Q. *What ſort of hatred of ſin is it, that is an ingredient of true repentance?*

A. It hath theſe properties; 1. It is a ſincere and well-grounded hatred: unrenewed men may hate ſin becauſe of its effects; but a true penitent hates it, becauſe it is vile and loathſome in the eyes of God, the murderer of Chriſt, and an enemy to his own ſoul.

2*dly*, It is a deep and implacable hatred; a natural man can have no ſuch hatred of ſin; it is only a ſlight or tranſient quarrel he may have with ſin upon ſome particular occaſion, and hence he may proceed to lop off ſome of the branches of ſin, but he ſtrikes not at the root, the corruption of the heart; he ſeeks not to put the old man to death. But the true penitent hates ſin implacably; he ſeeks its ruin, aims at its life, and would have it utterly extirpated; and longs for the time when he ſhall be wholly delivered from it, Rom. vii. 24. 2 Cor. v. 4.

3*dly*, It is an univerſal hatred: a natural man may hate ſome odious groſs ſins, or ſins that are neither pleaſant nor profitable to him: but the true penitent hates ſin, as ſin, and ſo hates every ſin, whether ſecret or open, pleaſant or profitable, in himſelf or in others, Pſalm cxix. 128.

Q. *What ſort of turning from ſin, is requiſite to true repentance?*

A. 1. A turning that proceeds from right principles, not from the dictates of a natural conſcience only, or reſpect to human laws, or from fear of God's judgment: but from a

ſenſe of the intrinſic evil of ſin, the holineſs and goodneſs of God, or a view of Chriſt's ſufferings.

2*dly*, It muſt be a preſent turning from ſin, without delaying one moment longer, Pſal. cxix. 59, 60.

3*dly*, A final and everlaſting turning without ever looking back to Sodom again, or entertaining a favourable thought of ſin that killed the Lord of life, Hoſea xiv. 8.

4*thly*, An univerſal turning from all ſin, both in heart and life; no Agag muſt be ſpared, nor any darling luſt reſerved, Iſaiah lv. 5. Ezek. xviii. 30, 31.

5*thly*, It muſt be attended with turning to God, and all commanded duties; for we muſt not only ceaſe to do evil, but learn to do well, Iſa. i. 16, 17. Iſa. lv. 7.

6*thly*, This turning ought to be with all the heart, and with faſting, weeping and mourning, Joel ii. 12.

Q. *What is this turning to God, which is included in true repentance?*

A. It implies theſe things, 1. A ſight and ſenſe of our undone condition, while we live and continue at a diſtance from God; and the great happineſs of nearneſs to him, Pſalm lxxiii. 27, 28.

2*dly*, The outgoings of the ſoul to God in ſpiritual breathings and deſires, Iſaiah xxvi. 8. Job xxiii. 3.

3*dly*, The humble application of the ſoul to God in Chriſt, for mercy and pardon, Pſalm. li. 1.

4*thly*, The ſoul's making choice of God for its God and portion, Jer. iii. 22.

5*thly*, Our reſigning and giving up both inward and outward man to God's ſervice and obedience. We muſt turn both our hearts and feet to God's teſtimonies, Pſalm cxix. 57, 58, 59.

Q. *Why is faſting neceſſary to be joined with our repentance and turning unto God?*

A. Becauſe God hath enjoined it as a good mean to wean the heart from the world, quicken prayer, and kindle zeal. And it carries in it ſomewhat of a holy revenge upon the fleſh or body for its former exceſſes, which is very acceptable to God; though it cannot in the leaſt make ſatisfaction to juſtice for ſin, 2 Cor. vii. 11.

Q. *Are tears abſolutely neceſſary to true repentance?*

A. They are very deſirable expreſſions of our grief for ſin. God ſ[illegible] the tears of true penitents, and puts them upon

a bottle, Pſalm lvi. 8. Yet ſometimes there may be a tender heart, where are few tears to be ſeen, becauſe the bodily conſtitution may be dry, and not qualified for producing tears. But if we can command tears for other things, ſuch as worldly loſſes and croſſes, and can find none to ſhed for ſin, there is too much ground to ſuſpect that our repentance is not true.

Q. But what ſhall theſe do, who find their hearts ſo hard, that they can neither get tears, nor any true grief for ſin?

A. 1*ſt*. This has been the complaint of many of God's people, that their hearts are hardened from God's fear, Iſaiah lxiii. 17.

2*dly*, Let us conſider if our heart-hardneſs be our great burden and trouble. Can we ſay, that it is our daily complaint to God, and that we would give all we have in the world to have our hearts brought to tenderneſs, and even live beggars upon this condition; then, ſurely, there is ſome life and tenderneſs in the ſoul.

3*dly*, Let us go to Chriſt, and plead for the bleſſed Spirit of grace, which he hath both purchaſed and promiſed, to take off the vail of darkneſs from our hearts, and the ſcales of blindneſs from our eyes: that we may ſee ſin in its blackneſs and deformity; let us cry to him with Job iii. 23. 'Make me 'to know my tranſgreſſion and my ſin.' And let us plead his free promiſe, Ezek. xxxvi. 26.

4*thly*, Let us oft be aiming to apply the ſoftning blood of Chriſt to our hard hearts; and oft be viewing ſin in the bright looking-glaſs of his ſufferings. Oh! can we ſee our ſins binding a heavy croſs on Chriſt's back, driving big nails into the moſt ſenſible parts of his body, and piercing his heart with ſorrow, and yet our hearts remain unpierced? Shall the rocks rent, and the earth ſhake, the ſun draw in its light, and the heavens mourn in black, when Chriſt ſuffered for our ſins, and yet we ſtand unconcerned! Surely there is not ſuch a heart-affecting ſight either in earth or hell, as the death of our innocent Redeemer.

Q. Why is repentance and ſorrow for ſin ſo neceſſary to right communicating?

A. 1. Becauſe it is neceſſary for our acceſs to and communion with God in any duty. It is to ſuch that God hath promiſed to look, and with ſuch that he is pleaſed to dwell. It is only humble and penitent addreſſes that he will accept; and ſince he preferred a broken heart to all ſacrifices, Pſalm

li. 16, 17. Pſal. x. 17: Pſalm xxxiv. 18. Iſaiah lvii. 15. Iſaiah lxvi. 1. But impenitent perſons are hateful to God, and can have no communion with him, Pſalm v. 5. Pſalm lxviii. 11.

2dly, Becauſe in this ſacrament, we enter into, and renew covenant with God; and penitent mourning for long diſtance and eſtragement, or many ſins and backſlidings, is previouſly requiſite thereunto, Jer. l, 4, 5.

3dly, Becauſe here we are to receive the ſeal of the pardon of our ſins, and it is only a ſoft heart that can receive the impreſſion of this ſeal, Luke viii. 44, 48. Luke xxiv. 47.

4thly, Becauſe nothing ſuits a broken Chriſt, ſo well as a broken heart. In this ordinance, we behold God puniſhing his Son for ſin, and Chriſt breathing out his dying groans for it; and ſurely it is moſt fit that our hearts ſhould bleed for it? If Chriſt waſh our ſouls with his blood, in gratitude we ſhould waſh his feet with our teare, Zech. xii. 10. Luke vii. 38, 47.

5thly, Becauſe, without repentance, we cannot prize the great bleſſings and comforts exhibited to us in this ordinance. None but the ſenſible ſinner and humble penitent will value the blood of Chriſt, the pardon of ſin, and favour of God which are here offered, Matth ix. 12. Luke i. 53. Prov. xxvii. 7.

6thly, Becauſe repentance is abſolutely neceſſary for killing of ſin, and reforming the life, which is one great end in this ordinance. As God here lets us ſee his love to Chriſt, ſo he diſcovers the bitterneſs of ſin, that we may hate and forſake it; now it is by repentance, that we taſte of ſin's bitterneſs; and the neceſſity hereof, at this ordinance, was prefigured by the bitter herbs with which the children of Iſrael were appointed to eat the paſſover, Exod. xii. 8.

Q. *Hath not repentance many counterfeits?*

A. Yes; For, 1. Some confeſs their ſin, who never forſake it; as theſe, Num. xiv. 40. 1 Sam. xv. 24. That was but a counterfeit repentance.

2dly, Some have ſlight, ſuperficial ſorrow, and outward expreſſions of mourning, where the heart is not touched for ſin, 1 Kings xxi. 27.

3dly, Some may have the heart rent with legal convictions and terrors, as Judas and Felix had, and yet never broken or melted for ſin.

4thly, Some may have a natural ſoftneſs and tenderneſs of ſpirit, whereby they are apt to relent and ſhed tears at the

hearing of any tragical ſtory, or ſeeing any moving object, and yet, never truly weep, to ſee their own ſin. The ſtory of Joſeph in the pit will affect them aſſoon as that of Chriſt upon the croſs.

5*thly*, Some have ſeveral good motions, and pangs of ſorrow, at hearing of a ſermon, or when they are under the rod, which yet ſoon evaniſh, Hoſea vi. 4. Mark vi. 20.

6*thly*, Some come under expreſs vows and reſolutions againſt ſin in time of ſickneſs or diſtreſs, or when conſcience is awakened; who yet are never true penitents for ſin, Num. xxii. 17. Jer. ii. 20. 1 Sam. xxvi. 21.

7*thly*, Some may not only leave off groſs ſins themſelves, but expreſs great zeal againſt the ſins of others, as Jehu did, againſt the worſhip of Baal, and Judas did, againſt prodigality, and yet be ſtrangers to true repentance, 2 Kings x. 16, 28, 29. Matth. xxvi. 8. compared with John xii. 4, 5. All theſe then, are but counterfeited repentance.

Q. *By what marks then ſhall we examine our repentance, if it be true and not counterfeited?*

A. By theſe already mentioned, in the parts and deſcription of repentance before given. To which I add theſe.

1. A true penitent is more grieved for the evil of ſin, than for the evil of affliction; and more troubled for abuſing the goodneſs of a father, than for drawing down the wrath of a judge, Luke xv. 18.

2*dly*, The true penitent lays the ax of repentance to the root of ſin, viz. the corrupt heart; he pants for deliverance from it, and for more heart-purity and renovation, Pſalm li. 10. Rom. vii 24.

3*dly*, The true penitent is highly concerned and careful to apply to the blood of Chriſt both for pardon from the guilt of ſin, and ſanctification from the pollution of ſin; for true repentance and ſaving faith are inſeparable, Pſalm li. 1, 7. Acts ii. 38. Acts xx. 21 Mark i. 15.

4*thly*, Let us examine our repentance, by theſe adjuncts and fruits of it, recorded in 2 Cor. vii. 11. If it works in us, 1. Carefulneſs, to avoid ſin and preſerve ourſelves from it. 2*dly*, Clearing of ourſelves, by ſelf-examination, and applying to Chriſt our ſurety. 3*dly*, Indignation againſt ſin, as the enemy of God, the murderer of Chriſt, and deſtroyer of our ſouls 4*thly*, Fear, of being defiled again with ſin, which excites to watch againſt temptations, and inlets to it. 5*thly*

hement deſires after a total deliverance from it, and after Chriſt our deliverer, and his righteouſneſs. *6thly*, Zeal for God's honour, by new obedience, and bringing forth fruits meet for repentance. *7thly*, Revenge upon ſin, by mortification, becauſe it crucified Chriſt. *8thly*, There is a holy ſhame upon the remembrance of ſin; not that of a thief, becauſe of the puniſhment and diſgrace, but that of a ſon, becauſe of the ingratitude and loathſomeneſs of ſin, Ezek. xvi. 63.

IV. Concerning HOLY FEAR.

Queſt. *WHAT is this fear that is requiſite to worthy communicating?*

A. It is a holy awe and reverence of God, wrought in the renewed heart by the Holy Spirit, whereby the ſoul out of a deep ſenſe of God's majeſty and goodneſs, is inclined to draw nigh to God in Chriſt, ſtand in awe to offend him, avoid ſin as the greateſt evil, and ſtudy the things that are pleaſing to God, Jer. xxxii. 40. Jer. v. 22. Pſalm cxxx. 4. Heb. xi. Gen. xxxix. 9. Job i. 1, 7. Acts x. 35.

Q. *What is the neceſſity of this holy fear at the Lord's table?*

A. 1. Becauſe when we go to the Lord's table, we ſolemnly ſift ourſelves in the preſence of the great Jehovah, who is our judge, the ſearcher of our hearts, and the all-ſeeing obſerver of our actions; and a God that is very jealous of his honour, and 'will be ſanctified in all that draw nigh to him,' Lev. x. 3. Heb. xii. 28, 29.

2dly, Becauſe at the Lord's table, we have a moſt awful diſcovery of the holineſs and juſtice of God in the ſufferings of Chriſt there repreſented. How vehemently did he hate ſin, that he would not ſpare his dear Son when he cried, nor abate one farthing of the debt he owed to juſtice as our ſurety, but exacted full ſatisfaction, and puniſhed ſin to the uttermoſt. The heavens darkened, and the earth ſhook, when God puniſhed Chriſt for ſin, and ought not we, the guilty ſinners, to tremble and adore his juſtice; ſaying, with the Bethſhemites, 'Who is able to ſtand before this holy Lord God?' 1 Sam. vi. 20.

3*dly*, Becauſe this holy fear is an excellent preſervative againſt wandering thoughts, a ſpur to mind our work, and excite the graces to livelineſs, and do every thing as in the ſight of an all ſeeing God, Pſalm lvi. 8. Gen. xxxix. 9. Neh. i. 11.

4*thly*, Becauſe of the importance of the work of communicating, and the danger of miſcarrying in it. We have ground to fear and be jealous of ourſelves, leſt we be found unwelcome gueſts, and want the wedding-garment, when the King comes in to ſee his gueſts. We have cauſe to fear, leſt we miſs Chriſt's preſence, and the ſeal of our pardon: yea, leſt we be guilty of wounding Chriſt, and eating and drinking judgment to ourſelves, by unworthy communicating; but a holy fear is a good mean to prevent this hazard.

Q. *How may we know whether we be acted by a holy, or by a ſlaviſh fear, in this and other religious duties?*

A. 1. A holy filial fear of God, is always joined with love to him; but a ſlaviſh fear is attended with ſome degree of enmity and hatred againſt God, Hoſ. iii. 5. Rom. viii. 7.

2*dly*, Slaviſh fear dreads God, becauſe of his power and juſtice; but filial fear alſo, becauſe of his goodneſs and loving-kindneſs, Hoſ. iii. 5.

3*dly*, Slaviſh fear is attended with a ſhyneſs of God's preſence; but filial fear puts the ſoul on to ſeek nearneſs with God, Gen. iii. 10. Pſalm lxxiii. 27, 28. Hoſ. iii. 5.

4*thly*, Slaviſh fear dreads nothing but hell and the puniſhment of ſins but filial fear dreads ſin itſelf, as the greateſt evil of the two, Pſalm vi. 4. Acts xxiv. 25. Pſalm iv. 4.

5*thly*, Slaviſh fear makes men averſe from the light of the world and a faithful miniſtry; but filial fear makes us ſuſpicious of ourſelves, and willing to be tried, John iii. 20, 21. 1 Kings xxii. 8.

6*thly*, Slaviſh fear reſtrains only from the external acts of ſin, and puts men on to external performances in duty only; but godly fear makes a man guard even againſt inward and ſecret ſins, and ſtudy to pleaſe God inwardly as well as outwardly, and give him the heart as well as the life, Iſa. viii. 13.

V. Concerning LOVE.

Queſt. *WHAT is that love which a worthy communicant ought to have?*

A. There is a three-fold love neceſſary; 1. Love to God and godlineſs. 2. Love to the people of God. 3. Love to our enemies.

Q. *What is true love to God?*

A. It is a ſpecial affection, or ſaving grace wrought by God's Spirit in the hearts of his people, whereby, from a ſpecial diſcovery of the glory and excellency of God, their ſouls are determined to have a high and ſuperlative eſteem of him, their deſires are carried out after him, and their delights are centered on him, as their chief good and portion, Rom. v. 5. Pſalm lxxiii. 25. Pſalm xliii. 1, 2. Pſalm xvi. 5, 6.

Q. *Why is love to God and Chriſt, ſo neceſſary to worthy communicating?*

A. 1. Becauſe this ſacrament is a love-feaſt, appointed for expreſſing the mutual love and affection of Chriſt and his people to one another, and therefore, it is deſigned only for his friends and diſciples. Now how contrary is it to the nature of this ordinance, for people to approach to it without love? Or to ſit down to this love-feaſt with enmity in their hearts at the Maſter of it? Cant. v. 1. Matth. xxvi. 27.

2dly, Becauſe we have here the higheſt repreſentation of divine love that ever was given. Here we may ſee both the arms and heart of the Son of God open, on a croſs to us, with his affections ſtreaming out to us in blood: and we may hear the dying groans of the Lamb of God, juſt expiring under the burden of wrath that was due to us. And what a monſtrous thing would it be for us to want love to him, at ſuch a time? Gal. ii. 20. Eph. v. 2. Rev. i. 5.

3dly, Becauſe other graces, which are to be exerciſed in this ordinance, do much depend upon love: Without it we cannot be heavenly-minded in this duty, we cannot have high thoughts of Chriſt, we cannot delight in him, nor have any hungering deſires after him. Without love to Chriſt, we cannot hate ſin, nor be grieved for it; nay, we may ſee the print of the nails, and put our fingers into his wounds without any

remorse for sin, that made them. Mary's tears were most free, when her love was most hot, Luke vii. 37, 38. Isaiah liii. 2, 3.

4thly, Without love to Christ, we can have no benefit by the sacraments, for we can have no communion with God, nor any manifestations of his favour without it, seeing these are only promised to such as love him, John xiv. 21, 23.

5thly, Because the want of this love, brings men under the severest curse, 1 Cor. xvi. 22.

Q. *Must not our love to God at the sacrament, be directed to all the persons of the glorious Trinity?*

A. Yes; we must love God the Father, as our father; God the Son, as our mediator and redeemer; and God the holy Ghost, as our sanctifier and comforter.

Q. *How may we know if we love God the Father, as our father?*

A. By our filial respect and dutiful carriage to him: if we fear him, and stand in awe to offend him, if we be tender of his honour, troubled at his frowns, desirous of his presence, and careful to please him. If we depend on him, for what we want; love to address him; imitate him in his holiness, and obey his injunctions, Mal. i. 6. Psalm cxxxix. 20, 21. Psalm xxx. 7. Isaiah lvi. 4, 5. Rom. viii. 15. 1 Pet. v. 7. Eph. v. 1. 1 Pet. i. 14, 15.

Q. *How may we know if we love God the Son, as our mediator and redeemer?*

A. By our accepting of him, and improving him in all his mediatory offices: learning of him as our Prophet, relying on him as our Priest, and obeying him as our King. And by our renouncing of all other lords and saviours besides him, Matth. xi. 28, 29. Isaiah xxvi. 13. Heb. v. 9. Eph. i. 12, 13.

Q. *How may we know if we love the Holy Ghost, as our sanctifier and comforter.*

A. By our hearkening to his calls, seeking his assistance in duties, laying ourselves open to his influences cherishing his motions, and delighting in these duties and ordinances where his operations are to be expected, and desiring to be directed and guided by him in all our ways, Psalm xxvii. 8. 1 Thess. v. 19. Eph. iii. 16. Psalm lxiii. 2. Psalm cxliii. 10. 11. Rom. viii. 14.

Q. *Seeing love to Christ, our crucified Saviour, is especially*

requiſite at the Lord's table; by what marks may we examine our love to him, if it be true, and not counterfeit?

A. By theſe, 1. Let us ſee if we can give any reaſon for our love to him; if we love him not only for what he hath done for elect ſinners in general, but for what he hath done for us in particular, in hearing our cry, and helping us when we were brought low under a burden of guilt and fears, Pſalm cxvi. 1, 6, 8.

2*dly*, If we love him alſo, becauſe of his own intrinſic beauty, matchleſs worth, and perſonal excellencies, that render him altogether lovely in himſelf, as well as a ſuitable Saviour to us, Cant. v. 10—16.

3*dly*, If our hearts and thoughts be frequently going out towards him, and our meditation of him be ſweet; for ſurely, if Chriſt be our treaſure, our hearts will be with him, Pſalm civ. 34. Matth. vi. 21.

4*thly*, If we be earneſtly deſirous of his gracious preſence in duties and ordinances, and languiſh for him when he withdraws, Pſalm lxxxiv. 1, 3. Cant. iii. 1, 2, 3. Cant. v. 8.

5*thly*, If we have common friends and common enemies; love what Chriſt loves, and hate what he hates; if we rejoice when his name is great, and his intereſt flouriſheth, and grieve when any wrong or diſhonour is done to him, either by ourſelves or others, 1 John v. 1, 2. Pſalm cxxxix. 21, 22. Pſalm xcvii. 10. John xiv. 28. Pſalm cxxii. 9.

6*thly*, If we love Chriſt, and his intereſts in all ſtates and conditions; own him under perſecution and reproach, and highly eſteem a crucified, as well as a glorified Chriſt, a condemned, as well as an adored Chriſt, Cant. viii. 6, 7.

7*thly*, If we love Chriſt wholly, and all that is in him; love him in all his offices, in his death as a ſacrifice, and in his life as a pattern; love him as a prince on the throne, as well as a prieſt on the croſs; love him for purity as well as pardon; for ſanctification, as well as ſatisfaction. No lover of Chriſt will deſire a diſjunction of Chriſt's prieſtly and princely offices, for he ſees them ſweetly linked together; and hence it is that Chriſt is ſtiled a 'prieſt upon a throne,' Zech. vi. 13. And therefore he will love his laws to obey them, his ordinances to attend them, his Sabbaths to ſanctify them, and his people to aſſociate with them, John xiv. 21. 1 Cor. v. 14, 15. 1 John v. 1, 2, 3. Pſalm cxix. 63.

8*thly*, If we love Chriſt above our relations, enjoyments,

and deareſt things we have in the world, yea, even life itſelf, Matth. x. 37. Acts xxi. 13. Rev. xii. 11.

9*thly*, If we be breathing after freſh intimations of Chriſt's love to us, and ſeeking ſtill more aſſurance and evidences of it, Cant. i. 2, 3. Cant. viii. 6.

Q. *What ſhall theſe exerciſed ſouls do, that ſuſpect their love to Chriſt is not ſuperlative; that they love him not above their relations, and deareſt enjoyments in the world? By what marks do we know if we do?*

A. By theſe, 1. If no affection to any creature can draw us willingly or wittingly, to do that which is diſpleaſing to Chriſt.

2*dly*, If we value Chriſt's friendſhip and favour more than that of any creature, and would chuſe rather to diſpleaſe all the world than offend him.

3*dly*, If the loſs of Chriſt's countenance, or any injury done to him, affect our hearts more than any worldly loſs or damage.

4*thly*, If it be our greateſt grief that we cannot get more love to Chriſt. And if we can appeal to himſelf, who knoweth our hearts, with Peter, that we love him ſincerely, though not ſo much as we ought, John xxii. 17. Eph vi. 24.

Q. *Are there not many who have left their firſt love, like theſe*, Rev. ii. 4. How ſhall we know if it be ſo with us?

A. If decay of love to Chriſt be our diſeaſe, it will have ſuch ſymptoms as theſe; 1. Chriſt will be leſs in our hearts and mouths than formerly.

2*dly*, We will be more ſlack in our obedience, and have leſs delight in duty than before.

3*dly*, It is a ſign of decaying love, when we loſe our tenderneſs of conſcience, and wonted abhorrence of ſin, Chriſt's enemy.

4*thly*, When we are more eaſy under Chriſt's abſence and withdrawings, and leſs anxious for his preſence.

5*thly*, When we loſe our wonted appetites for our ſpiritual food and nouriſhment from Chriſt, in the ordinances.

6*thly*, When we loſe our public-ſpiritedneſs and concern for the intereſt of Chriſt's kingdom and glory in the world.

7*thly*, When we are little concerned to have heart-holineſs which is Chriſt's image, drawn upon the ſoul.

8*thly*, When we have little deſire for Chriſt's ſecond coming, or for the enjoyment of him in heaven.

9*thly*, When earthly mindedneſs, and love to the world is on the growing hand.

Q. *Is there not a love to worldly things, which is lawful and allowable? How may we know when we love the world too much?*

A. Our love to the world is unlawful and exceſſive, when,

1. Worldly things are firſt in our thoughts in the morning, or laſt at night.

2*dly*, When they juſtle out ſpiritual things from our minds.

3*dly*, When we think on worldly affairs with greater intenſeneſs of mind, than theſe things that are ſpiritual and heavenly.

4*thly*, When the impreſſions of worldly things laſt longer with us, than theſe things which immediately concern the glory of God, and our ſoul's good.

5*thly*, When the ends we propoſe to ourſelves in worldly cares are chiefly, that we may ſatisfy our natural deſires, prevent poverty, or make ourſelves great; not that we may glorify God, and be more capable to ſerve him.

Q. *What ſhall we do to get the decayed fire of love to Chriſt kindled and increaſed?*

A. 1. Let us labour to be deeply ſenſible of this evil of decay of love to Chriſt, and heavily bemoan the coldneſs of our hearts before God.

2*dly*, Let us humbly apply to Chriſt our great phyſician, who can only cure this plague of a ſpiritual conſumption, as well as our other ſoul-diſeaſes.

3*dly*, Let us earneſtly ſeek after further diſcoveries of Chriſt's excellency and lovelineſs; for if we once ſaw his beauty, our hearts would ſurely go out after him.

4*thly*, Let us meditate much on the love of a crucified Jeſus, in ſweating blood, and laying down his life for ſuch enemies as we are: let us take a view of him in his dyed garments, as he is deſcribed, Iſaiah lxiii. 1, 2, 3.

5*thly*, Let us carefully ſearch out the luſt or idol, the Delilah, or worldly enjoyment, that hath ſtolen our hearts from Chriſt; and when we have found it, let neither our eye pity nor ſpare it, but preſently caſt it out.

6*thly*, Let us ſeriouſly think, on the one hand, upon the heavy curſe and vengeance which abide thoſe that do not love Chriſt, 1 Cor. xvi. 22. And on the other hand, upon the unſpeakable reward laid up for all true lovers of Chriſt, as recorded, 2 Tim. iv. 8. 1 Cor. ii. 9.

7*thly*, Let us conſider that loving of Chriſt, will be the eternal employment of ſaints in heaven: this grace of love abides for ever when all the reſt do fail.

8*thly*, Let us earneſtly pray for the breathings of his holy Spirit, theſe 'north and ſouth winds to blow on our withered 'gardens.' And let us plead his gracious promiſes of ſtrength and quickening which he makes to languiſhing and decaying ſouls, particularly theſe, Iſaiah xl. 29, 30, 31. Jer. xxxiii. 6. Zech. xii. 8. Hoſ. xiv. 5, 6, 7. Let us often cry with David, 'Quicken thou me according to thy word,' Pſalm cxix. 25, 107, 154, &c.

9*thly*, Let us, in this caſe, follow the advice and preſcription of Chriſt, our great phyſician, Rev. iii. 4, 5. 'Thou 'haſt left thy firſt love, remember from whence thou art 'fallen, and repent, and do thy firſt works.'

The advice contains three directions; 1. 'Remember 'from whence thou art fallen,' i. e. compare thy former ſtate with the preſent: remember what a warm heart and lively affections you once had to Chriſt, and how cold and dead they are now.

2*dly*, 'Repent,' i. e. Mourn over your ſad backſlidings and decays, and acknowledge them before God.

3*dly*, 'Do thy firſt works,' i. e. Be as diligent in duty as formerly. When we find this holy fire decayed, we ought to caſt on more fewel; i. e. Uſe all God's appointed means for rekindling the flame, be much in prayer, reading and hearing the word; delight much in the converſe and fellowſhip of warm and lively Chriſtians, and go frequently to that heart-warming and love-inflaming ordinance of the Lord's ſupper, carefully guarding againſt formality in communicating, or ſlightneſs in preparing for it.

Q. *What way ſhould the lovers of Chriſt expreſs, or ſhew forth their love to him?*

A. 1. By ſtudying likeneſs and conformity to him. Holineſs is Chriſt's image: let us imitate Chriſt herein, that we may in ſome meaſure be like him whom we love in meekneſs, humility, ſelf-denial, deligence, and heavenly-mindedneſs: In a word let us be holy in our thoughts, affections, ſpeeches, actions, and in all manner of converſation; for ſo Chriſt was, Heb. vii. 26, 1 Pet. i. 15, 16.

2*dly*, Let us ſeek to converſe with him, and be much in his company; let us walk with him in the galleries of ordi-

nances, and be much in ſecret prayer, and in all theſe duties, where fellowſhip with him is to be obtained, Cant. i. 7. Cant. iii. 2. Cant. vii. 5. Cant. viii. 13.

3dly, Obſerve his injunctions and keep his commandments, John xiv. 15.

4thly, Be concerned for his intereſt, kingdom and glory upon earth, Pſalm. cxxii. 9. Phil. ii. 21.

5thly, Let us place all relations, worldly intereſts, and enjoyments below him, Matth. x. 37.

6thly, Give ready audience to his ambaſſadors, and kindly entertainment to all his love-motions, Pſalm xlv. 10. Cant. v. 2.

7thly, Avoid every thing that Chriſt hates, Pſalm xcvii. 10. Pſalm xlv. 7.

8thly, Love his people and whatever bears his image, 1 John v. 1.

Concerning LOVE to GOD's people.

Queſt. *WHY is love to our neighbours, and eſpecially the people of God, ſo neceſſary for a worthy communicant?*

A. 1. Becauſe God requires us, in all our ſolemn approaches to him, to ſee that we be in a ſtate of amity and friendſhip with our brother; not harbouring any wrath or malice in our hearts, as we would be accepted of God, Matth. v. 23, 25. 1 Cor. v. 8. 1 Tim. ii. 8.

2dly, Becauſe it is one end of this ordinance to repreſent the union of believers together into one myſtical body, as the bread is made up of many grains compacted together; and alſo to teſtify their communion and fellowſhip with one another as members of the ſame body: And how can this be done without mutual love? 1 Cor. x. 16, 17.

3dly, Becauſe brotherly love is inſeparable from faith, and given frequently as a mark of Chriſt's diſciples, for whom this ſacrament is appointed, John xiii. 35. 1 John iii. 4. 1 John iv. 7.

4thly, Becauſe without this love we can expect no benefit by this ordinance, nor any communion with Chriſt in it, 1 Ep. ii. 1, 2, 3. 1 John iii. 23, 24. 1 John iv. 13, 16. As

the Spirit deſcended on the diſciples, when they met together in one houſe and were all of one mind and one heart, ſo he will not enter the houſe or heart where love and peace do not dwell, Acts ii. 1, 4. Acts iv. 31, 32. Jer. xxxii. 39, 40.

5thly, Becauſe as we are bound to remember Chriſt's death in the ſacrament, ſo we ought in receiving it to remember the dying charge and injunctions he gave his people, when he inſtituted and diſpenſed it: and particularly this of brotherly love, which he ſo earneſtly preſſed in his ſacramental diſcourſe and farewell ſermon, John xv. 12, 17. And alſo prayed for it, John xvii. 11, 21.

Q. *But if my neighbour hath offended me, or I him, and declineth to return to a ſtate of love and reconciliation to me: ſhould this hinder me from partaking of the Lord's ſupper?*

A. If we ſincerely uſe the means which God hath appointed, in order to a reconciliation with our offending and offended brother, and endeavour, ſo far as we have acceſs, to have the difference removed, and entertain no prejudice, hatred, or revenge in our hearts againſt him: though our endeavours of reconciliation ſhould not have the deſired effect, through our neighbour's obſtinacy or untractableneſs, we are not to abſtain from our duty, or deprive ourſelves of the benefit of this ordinance, becauſe of his fault, Matth. v. 23, 24.

Q. *By what marks may we know if our love to God's people be true and ſincere?*

A. By theſe, 1. If we love them upon ſpiritual grounds, becauſe of their relation to God as his children, and to Chriſt as his members, and becauſe of their likeneſs to God and Chriſt in holineſs, 1 John v. 1, 2. 1 Pet. i. 22.

2dly, If we love them univerſally, whether they be rich or poor, relations or ſtrangers, and even though they differ from us in ſome leſſer things, Col. i. 4. 1 Pet. ii. 17.

3dly, If we love them fervently, and above all others, 1 Pet. i. 22. Pſalm xvi. 3.

4thly, If we love them conſtantly, in adverſity as well as proſperity, when they are deſpiſed, reproached and perſecuted by the world, as well as when honoured and eſteemed, John xiii. 2. 1 John iii. 16, 17. Heb. xiii. 1.

5thly, If we prefer their company, and delight in it above that of any others, Pſalm cxix. 63. Pſalm xvi. 3.

6thly, If we ſympathize with them, both in their joys and ſorrows, Rom. xii. 15. 1 Cor. xii. 26.

7thly, If we be ready to ſerve them, and ſupply their wants, 1 John iii. 18, 19. James ii. 15, 16.

8thly, If we can bear with injuries from them, and be ready to forgive them, and even to cover their faults from others, 1 Cor. xiii. 4, 7. Eph. iv. 32. 1 Pet. iv. 8.

Concerning LOVE to our ENEMIES.

Queſt. *WHEREFORE ought we to love our enemies?*

A. 1. Becauſe God hath commanded it, Matth. v. 44. Rom. xii. 14.

2dly, Becauſe of the example of God in loving and forgiving us who are enemies to him, and of Chriſt in dying for us, Eph. iv. 32. Col. iii. 13.

Q. *What ſort of love is it that we ought to bear to our enemies?*

A. A love of benevolence and beneficence, though not a love of delight and complacency, Matth. v. 44, 45. Rom. xii. 20, 21.

Q. *How may we know if our love to our enemies be true?*

A. 1. If the example of Chriſt's loving and dying for his enemies, have influence upon us, Rom. v. 8. 10. Col. iii. 13.

2dly. If we incline to forgive them, and wiſh their good and welfare, Luke xi. 12. Prov. xi. 23.

3dly, If we rejoice not in their hurt, Prov. xxiv. 17, 18.

4thly, If we ſhun to revenge ourſelves upon them, Rom. xii. 17, 19.

5thly, If we pray for them, relieve their wants and return them good for evil, Matth. v. 44. Rom. xii. 20, 21.

VI. Concerning THANKFULNESS.

Queſt. *WHY is thankfulneſs to God ſo neceſſary in partaking of the Lord's ſupper?*

A. 1. Becauſe in this ordinance we have the repreſentation of the greateſt love and goodneſs that ever God expreſſed to

the world, in giving his dearly beloved Son to be a ſacrifice for ſin, and offering him to be a Saviour to us, John iii. 16. Gal. iii. 1.

2*dly*, Thankfulneſs to God is a ſpecial deſign of this ordinance: upon which account it is called the Euchariſt or thankſgiving; becauſe here we expreſs our thankful remembrance of redeeming love, and celebrate the praiſes of our loving Redeemer, Mark xiv. 26.

Q. *How may we know if our thankfulneſs be of the right ſtamp?*

A. 1. By our low thoughts of ourſelves, and our diſclaiming all worthineſs in us to receive the leaſt mercy, Gen. xxxii. 10.

2*dly*, By our having a high eſteem of God's mercies to us, and eſpecially ſpiritual bleſſings; reckoning Jeſus Chriſt to be the mercy of mercies, Luke i. 68, 72. 2 Cor. ix. 15.

3*dly*, By our dutiful rendering to God according to the mercies received from him, Pſalm cxvi. 12. 2 Chron. xxxii. 25.

Q. *What is that a thankful communicant ſhould render unto the Lord?*

A. 1. Both ſoul and body, as a living ſacrifice and thankoffering, 2 Chron. xxx. 8. 2 Cor. viii. 5. Rom. xii. 1.

2*dly*, Sincere love and hearty affection, Luke vi. 27, 28, 47.

3*dly*, High praiſes and humble prayers, Pſalm cvi. 1, 2. Pſalm cxvi. 1, 2, 17. Pſalm ciii. 1, 2, 3. 1 Tim. i. 15, 17.

4*thly*, Paying our ſacramental vows by a holy walk, diligent ſervice, and zealous acting for God's glory, Pſalm cxvi. 12, 14. Pſalm cxix. 106. 1 Cor. v. 15. Acts xxi. 13.

VII. Concerning HOLY DESIRES.

Queſt. *WHAT are thoſe holy deſires, which are neceſſary for worthy communicants?*

A. They are the ſoul's ſpiritual appetite, or its hunger and thirſt after Chriſt and his benefits, as its proper food and nouriſhment, Iſaiah xxvi. 8, 9. Matth. v. 6.

Q. *Why is this holy deſire or ſpiritual appetite ſo neceſſary to worthy partaking?*

A 1. Becauſe it is neceſſary in all our duties and approaches to God, and much more in this which is ſo ſolemn, Pſalm lxiii. 8.

2*dly*, This ordinance is a feaſt, and certainly an appetite is proper for that, if we would profit by it. Without it we can taſte no ſpiritual ſweetneſs in this feaſt, get no nouriſhment by it, nor expect welcome to it, Matth. v. 6. Luke i. 53. Rev. xxii. 17.

3*dly*, The greater our appetite and longings be, the greater will be our ſatisfaction: when the deſire opens the heart wideſt, God opens the hand largeſt to fill it, Pſalm lxxxi. 19.

Q. *How may we know if our deſires or appetite be of the right ſort?*

A. By theſe marks; 1. True hunger is inſatiable without food: bring a treaſure, a crown, or the greateſt preferments to a hungry man, all cannot ſatisfy him: ſo nothing can ſatisfy the hungry ſoul but Chriſt; not his ordinances or benefits only, but himſelf; not the ſupper or bread of the Lord, but the Lord of the ſupper, and the Lord of the bread, Pſalm lxxiii. 25. Job xxiii. 3.

2*dly*, Hunger is inſupportable without meat; the man muſt die if he want it; ſo the truly hungry ſoul cannot live or ſubſiſt without Chriſt: he can bear the want of other things, but Chriſt he cannot want, Pſalm cxliii. 7, 9.

3*dly*, Hunger makes a man reſolute, active and induſtrious, he will ſpare neither coſt nor travel for food: it would even break through ſtone-walls: ſo a hungry ſoul will venture through all difficulties to find Chriſt, Cant. iii. 2, 3.

4*thly*, Hunger makes a man very humble; he will make the coarſer bread, or meaneſt crumb very welcome: ſo the truly hungry ſoul will be content to have Chriſt upon any terms, though it were even to be the meaneſt ſervant of his houſe, or ſet with his dogs, provided always he may have a relation to his family, Luke xv. 10. Matth. xv. 27.

5*thly*, Hunger makes a man reſtleſs and impatient of delays till food be brought; ſo the hungry ſoul cries oft, 'How 'long, Lord, wilt thou forget me? How long wilt thou hide 'thy face? When ſhall I come and appear before God?' Pſal. xiii. 1. Pſalm. x. 2.

6*thly*, It makes a man prefer Chriſt and his ordinances to

all his worldly intereſts, and willing to part with all things to obtain theſe, Luke v. 11.

7thly, It makes Chriſt and his ſpiritual benefits very ſweet and pleaſant to the ſoul, and likewiſe the ordinances that do convey them, Cant. ii. 3. Pſalm cxxxii. 1.

VIII. Concerning NEW OBEDIENCE.

Queſt. *WHAT is that new-obedience which is required in worthy communicants?*

A. It is an unfeigned deſire and purpoſe of the ſoul, followed with ſuitable endeavours in the life, (through the ſtrength of Chriſt) to yield ſincere, conſtant and univerſal obedience to God's revealed will; being humbled for ſhortcomings, and deſirous to be clothed with Chriſt's righteouſneſs, and accepted of God, only for the ſake of his perfect obedience, Pſalm cxix. 4, 5, 6, 30, 31, 32, 112. Phil. iv. 13. 2 Chron. xxx. 18, 19. Phil. iii. 9.

Q. *Why is it called new-obedience?*

A. Becauſe it is only performed by theſe who are new-creatures, and are actuated by new principles, and enabled by new ſtrength, according to the tenor of the new covenant, 2 Cor. v. 17. Rom. xii. 2. Phil. iv. 13.

Q. *Why is this new-obedience needful to worthy partaking?*

A. 1. Becauſe the new covenant, which is ſealed in this ordinance, doth bind us to it; for as here we take God for our God; ſo we give up ourſelves to be his people, which neceſſarily includes our obedience to him, Jer. xxxi. 33. Heb. viii. 10.

2dly, Becauſe without new-obedience, and ſincere purpoſes of it, a man comes to the Lord's table in a ſtate of rebellion, and not in obedience to Chriſt, and ſo can have no communion with him: for his fair profeſſion is but diſſimulation, and his religious performances hypocritical and abominable to God, 1 Sam. xv. 22, 23. Amos iii. 3. Tit. i. 16.

3dly, Carefulneſs to maintain good works is poſitively required of all that cloſe with Chriſt by faith, and is an evidence of the reality of our faith, Tit. iii. 8. James ii. 18, 2

4*thly*, There can be no true thankfulneſs for redeeming love without it, Rom. xii. 1. 2 Cor. vii. 1.

5*thly*, Without holineſs in heart and life there is no ſeeing of God, Matth. v. 8. Heb. xii. 14.

Q. *How ſhall we examine the truth and reality of our new-obedience?*

A. We ought to inquire into theſe five things; 1. If it ſpring from new principles. 2*dly*, If it be guided by a new rule. 3*dly*, If it be done in a new manner. 4*thly*, If it aim at new ends. 5*thly*, If it hath new properties.

Q. *What are the principles of goſpel-obedience?*

A. The graces of God's Spirit planted in the heart, and eſpecially the graces of faith, love, and fear of God. Fear of hell, or love of reward may force the hypocrite to ſome ſort of obedience; but love to God, and a tender regard to his authority do chiefly influence the believer, Rom. xvi. 26. Heb. xi. 7, 8. 2 Cor. v. 14. Pſalm cxix. 4, 5. Acts x. 35.

Q. *What is the rule of goſpel-obedience?*

A. 1. The will and commands of God revealed and contained in the holy ſcriptures; and not the precepts and inventions of men, Iſaiah viii. 20. 1 Theſſ. iv. 3. Pſalm cxix. 4, 5. Gal. vi. 16.

2*dly*, The example of Jeſus Chriſt our pattern, 1 John ii. 6.

Q. *What is the new manner in which goſpel-obedience is performed?*

A. It is done in faith, i. e. depending on the ſtrength of Chriſt, for enabling us to it, and on the righteouſneſs of Chriſt for our acceptance in it, and leaning nothing upon any of our own performances, but relying entirely upon Chriſt, Col. iii. 17. Phil. iv. 3. Eph. i. 6. Luke xvii. 10, Phil. iii. 6, 7, 8, 9.

Q. *What are the ends which believers aim at, in their new-obedience?*

A. Not to gain the world, or get the applauſe of men, as hypocrites do; but to pleaſe God, ſhew forth his glory, and promote their neighbour's edification, 1 Cor. x. 31. Col. i. 10. Matth. v. 16. Phil. ii. 4.

Q. *What are the properties of goſpel-obedience?*

A. It is univerſal; the obedience of the whole man to the whole laws and commands of God, Pſalm cxix. 34. 2 Cor. vii. 20.

2*dly*, It is a willing obedience, not conſtrained by the com-

mands of men, education, a natural conſcience, or fear of hell; but an obedience that ſprings from love to God and his ways, Pſalm cx. 3. Pſalm xl. 8. Rom. vii. 22.

3dly, It is a quick and ſpeedy obedience. Pſalm cxix. 60. Gal. i. 16.

4thly, It is a perſevering and reſolute obedience, notwithſtanding of trials and difficulties, Pſalm cxix. 106, 112. Acts xi. 23. Rev. ii. 19.

5thly, It is a humble and ſelf-denied obedience, Luke xviii. 10.

6thly, It is a fiducial obedience, performed in Chriſt's ſtrength, and relying on his merits for acceptance with God, Eph. i. 6. Heb. xiii. 15.

So much concerning the firſt part of our preparation for the Lord's ſupper, viz. Self-examination. And ſo we come to the ſecond part,

Concerning the excitation of GRACE.

Queſt. *Why ſhould grace be excited and quickened, before our partaking of the Lord's ſupper?*

A. Becauſe livelineſs and activity of ſoul is neceſſary to worthy communicating. That a man may be qualified for a feaſt, it is fit that he not only be living, but alſo be in health, and have an appetite: for a ſick or a ſwooning perſon is unfit for a feaſt, as well as a dead man. So in order to worthy communicating, it is requiſite that grace not only be in the habit, but that it be brought forth to the lively exerciſe: and that for theſe reaſons.

1. The very work of communicating lies in the vigorous actings of faith, love, repentance, and other graces of the Spirit.

2dly, Becauſe in this ordinance, we make a ſolemn and immediate approach unto the living God, who will be ſerved in a lively manner, and abhorreth a cold and luke-warm temper in his worſhip, Rom. xii. 11. Acts xxvi. 7. Rev. iii. 19. Mal. i. 4.

3dly, Becauſe to act without livelineſs, is not only unſuitable to this ſolemn ordinance, and to the author of it, but alſo

moſt uncomfortable to ourſelves; for lifeleſs duties are unpleaſant, and do occaſion many bitter reflections to the ſoul.

4*thly*, Without livelineſs of grace, we are in hazard of unworthy communicating, and of drawing down judgments on ourſelves, 1 Cor. xi. 28, 29, 30.

Q. *What is that lively frame of ſoul, which a communicant ſhould have, in approaching to the Lord's table?*

A. He ſhould have all the ſacramental graces drawn forth into exerciſe, and his heart thereby brought into a humble and ſelf-baſing frame, a melting and mourning frame, a believing and covenanting frame, a loving and affectionate frame, a longing and panting frame, a thankful and praiſing frame, and a willing and obedient frame, to run the ways of God's commandments, Pſalm cxix. 32.

Q. *What courſe ſhall we take, to get the ſacramental graces brought to a lively exerciſe?*

A. By the diligent uſe of the means which God hath inſtituted, particularly by reading and hearing of God's word, by ſerious and retired meditation upon proper objects, and by earneſt prayer and frequent ejaculations to God for the help of his Spirit.

Q. *What are theſe proper objects we ſhould meditate upon, in order to bring the grace of faith into lively exerciſe?*

A. Let us meditate on the greatneſs of Chriſt's ſufferings, the acceptableneſs of his ſacrifice, the infinite virtue of his blood, the fulneſs and ſweetneſs of his promiſes, and the freeneſs of his gracious invitations, with the aſſurance he gives of acceptance and welcome to all that come unto him.

Q. *What ſhall we meditate on, in order to get holy fear quickened?*

A. We ought to meditate on the infinite juſtice and holineſs of God; and his vehement indignation againſt ſin, manifeſted in the ſufferings of Chriſt for ſin; and upon the near approach we make to a holy God in this ordinance, and the danger of unworthy communicating.

Q. *What ſhould we meditate on, to get repentance quickened?*

A. Upon the heinous and God-provoking nature of ſin, the number and greatneſs of our ſins, the variety and greatneſs of our Redeemer's ſufferings, and upon our ſins as the cauſe of them all.

Q. *What ſhall we meditate on, to get love to God and Chriſt quickened?*

A. Upon the infinite love of God in ſending his own Son to die for us, upon the matchleſs love of Chriſt in coming into the world, his readineſs and willingneſs to ſacrifice himſelf for us, his intrinſic lovelineſs and excellency, the unſpeakable vileneſs and unworthineſs of thoſe whom he loved, and ſuffered ſo much for.

Q. *What ſhall we meditate upon, to get love to the people of God quickened?*

A. Upon the words of our dying Redeemer enjoining it, upon the image they bear, their near relation to Chriſt and to us; and upon the love of Chriſt in dying for them.

Q. *What ſhall we do, to get love to our enemies quickened?*

A. Let us think on Chriſt's command for it, and his example in loving and dying for us when enemies to him.

Q. *What ſhall we think on, to get our deſires and ſpiritual appetite quickened?*

A. Upon our ſouls manifold neceſſities and wants, the fulneſs and ſuitableneſs of the ſupplies Chriſt hath provided for us in this ordinance; and the gracious promiſes he hath made to ſatisfy theſe that hunger and thirſt.

Q. *What ſhall we meditate upon, to get our thankfulneſs to God quickened?*

A. Upon the freeneſs and greatneſs of redeeming love, the ſuitableneſs and excellency of the new covenant, the richneſs and fulneſs of this goſpel-feaſt, and our unworthineſs of the leaſt of God's mercies.

Q. *What ſhall theſe do, who complain of their ſpiritual deadneſs ſtill continuing, and who cannot get their hearts brought to a lively frame for approaching to this holy ordinance?*

A. 1. They ought to examine what may be the cauſe of their ſpiritual deadneſs. 2*dly*, Uſe all proper remedies for curing this diſeaſe.

Q. *What are the ordinary cauſes of our ſpiritual deadneſs?*

A. 1. Our commiſſion of ſome ſin, and not repenting for it; upon which account God is provoked to withhold the influences of his Spirit, Pſalm li. 11.

2*dly*, Our omiſſion of duty, or ſluggiſh performance of it, brings on deadneſs. A key not turned, ruſts in the lock, Iſa. lxiv. 7.

3*dly*, Our careleſs entertaining of convictions and the motions of the Holy Spirit, doth grieve and quench the Spirit and ſo brings on deadneſs.

4*thly*, Our unthankfulneſs for former mercies, eſpecially ſpiritual mercies and revivings, provokes God to ſhut his hand and ſuſpend his influences, Col. ii. 7.

5*thly*, Our earthly-mindedneſs, and taking too much liberty in the delights of the world, deadens the heart, Pſalm cxix. 37. Jude 19.

6*thly*, When we grow proud of gifts, attainments or enlargements in duty, God is provoked to blaſt them to us, James iv. 6.

7*thly*, Heavy troubles and diſcouragements tend to deaden the heart, Pſalm cxix. 107.

Q. *What are the proper remedies for curing our ſpiritual deadneſs?*

A. 1. Let us be deeply ſenſible of this ſad plague, ſearch out the cauſe of it, and be humbled for it before the Lord.

2*dly*, Let us ſtudy to keep up a lively faith of the unſeen things of another world; for when unbelief prevails, our ſpiritual life decays, Heb. iii. 12.

3*dly*, Let us act faith on Chriſt, and thereby draw life and quickening from him, who is the 'fountain of life and head of 'influences' to his people: he is a living head and will communicate life to his languiſhing members, John x. 10.

4*thly*, Let us carefully cheriſh all the motions and convictions of God's Spirit, watch againſt all known ſin, the love of the world, the company of the wicked, and every thing that tends to grieve and quench the Spirit, 1 Theſſ. v. 19.

5*thly*, Let us be frequent in reading, hearing, and meditating upon the quickening word and precepts of God, Pſalm cxix. 93.

6*thly*, Delight in the company of lively Chriſtians, whoſe flame may help to kindle our languiſhing ſpark, Pſalm cxix. 63.

7*thly*, Let us think much on the activity and livelineſs of the glorified ſaints and angels above, in the ſervice of the living God; and as we pray that we may, 'do his will on earth 'as they do in heaven,' let us join our endeavours with our prayers, chide our drowſy hearts, and excite them to livelineſs, Matth. vi. 10. Pſalm lvii. 8. Pſalm ciii. 1, 2. Jer. xxx. 21.

8*thly*, Let us attend God's quickening ordinance, and continue to uſe all means; ſtill waiting, longing, and looking to the Lord, who hath promiſed to 'give power to the faint,

'and to be as the dew to Israel,' Psalm xxvii. 8. Isaiah xl. 29, 31. Hos. xiv. 5.

Q. But what shall poor exercised souls do, who after using all means, find their deadness still continuing; Dare they adventure to approach to a living God in the sacrament?

A. 1. We ought to consider that our dying Saviour hath commanded us to come to his table, and we are under an indispensible obligation to obey it, and that our sinful indisposition cannot excuse us from our duty. And therefore,

2*dly*, We must not sist in complaining of our deadness, but we must be restless under it, mourn over it, pray against it, struggle in the use of all means to get it removed, and set our hearts to our duty: and if we be conscious to ourselves, that we have been honestly exercised, (though with much weakness) in the use of all appointed means, we are not to give over thoughts of communicating: but in obedience to Christ's command, and with a serious design to keep up the remembrance of his dying love, we ought to set about it, with hope and expectation that God will meet with us in this quickening ordinance, and graciously remove our complaints, according to his promise, Psalm ix. 18. Psalm xxxiii. 18, 22. Isa. xli. 17, 18.

3*dly*, Let us remember that this course of sincere aiming to obey Christ's command, and preparing ourselves in the use of all means, is to lay ourselves in God's way and road, who has promised to meet such as remember him in his ways, and commonly hath a desirable issue. For God oft surprises his people with supplies of life, when they are struggling with their deadness in the use of means; help comes in, in the mean time, so that though they begin duty with a dead frame, yet they end it with a lively. 'Before they are aware, their 'souls make them as chariots of Amminadib;' Isa. lxiv. 5. Cant. vi. 12. read Psalm xiii. the first verse compared with the latter.

Q. Are not retired meditations upon the sufferings of Christ, and secret prayer to God, two special means for quickening our graces, and preparing us for the Lord's table?

A. Yes; when they are rightly managed and duly performed.

I. Concerning the Meditation of CHRIST's SUFFERINGS.

Queſt. *WHEREIN doth the nature of the duty of ſolemn and retired meditation conſiſt?*

A. It conſiſts in the ſouls abſtracting and retiring itſelf from the world, and ſetting itſelf ſeriouſly to contemplate and think upon ſpiritual objects, for holy and practical uſes: which religious exerciſe is a very neceſſary and profitable duty in itſelf, and the character of a godly man, Joſh. i. 8. Pſal. i. 2. Gen. xxiv. 63. Pſal. cxix. 97.

Q. *What is the advantage of this duty?*

A. It is a great help to other duties, it affords matter to the tongue in prayer and praiſe, it makes us fruitful in reading and hearing the word, it over-awes the ſoul from ſinning, and melts the heart into penitential tears for ſin, it quickens the graces in communicating, raiſeth the ſoul's eſteem of Chriſt, enforceth holineſs, and excites to diligence and activity in the ſervice of God, Pſalm xl. 1. James i. 24. Pſalm cxix. 97, 99. Pſalm xc. 11. Pſalm li. 3. 2 Tim. i. 12. Cant. v. 16. Pſalm xxvi. 3. Heb. xi. 26.

Q. *Why is this uſeful and profitable duty ſo much neglected by us?*

A. 1. Becauſe of our ſpiritual ſloth, that make us unwilling to engage in duties, that are difficult, ſpiritual and tedious to the fleſh, Prov. xxi. 25.

2dly, Becauſe of our guilty conſciences, that make us unwilling to be alone and retired, leſt the mind ſhould fall upon itſelf, or bring the awful judge of the world, and a future ſtate into our remembrance, Rom. i. 28.

3dly, Becauſe of the carnality and dulneſs of our hearts, the throng of worldly buſineſs that takes up the time of many, the barrenneſs of our thoughts as to ſpiritual things, and the natural inclination of our hearts to wander and ſkip from one ſubject to another, Iſaiah vi. 10. Jer. iv. 14.

Q. *How ſhall we manage this work of retired meditation before the ſacrament?*

A. 1. Let us call in the aſſiſtance of the Spirit of God, to iſpoſe and fix our hearts for it, Cant. iv. 16.

2*dly*, Let us excite and rouſe up our ſouls and all their faculties to the work, Pſalm lvii. 8.

3*dly*, Let us meditate but upon one thing at once, and labour to keep the mind and thoughts fixed upon the object that we think on, for ſome time together, till once our hearts be affected with it, and moved to holy mourning, prayer, or praiſe.

4*thly*, When we come any ſpeed in this exerciſe, let us bleſs God for it, and this is the way to have more ſucceſs in it: for as that which goeth up in vapours, comes down again in ſhowers; ſo that which goeth up in praiſes, comes down again in bleſſings, Pſalm lxvii. 5, 6.

5*thly*, Let us begin and end this work with prayer: in the beginning, let us pray for a bleſſing on the duty, and in the end, let us pray that God may preſerve the ſpiritual thoughts we have had upon our hearts, 2 Chron. xxix. 28.

6*thly*, Let us realize the preſence of God to ourſelves, and ſit ourſelves before his all-ſeeing eye, when we are about this exerciſe, firmly believing that his eye pierceth into our heart and moſt ſecret actions, Pſalm xvi. 8.

Q. *What ſhould be the ſpecial ſubjects of our meditation, before our approach to the Lord's table?*

A. The evil and demerit of ſin, the goodneſs of God, the love of Chriſt, the preciouſneſs of the ſoul, and the excellent contrivance of our redemption; all which, as in a bright looking-glaſs, we may contemplate and view in the ſufferings of Chriſt, which therefore ſhould be the principal ſubject of our meditation, 1 Cor. ii. 2 Gal. iii. 1. John i. 29.

Q. *What is it, in the ſufferings of Chriſt, that we ſhould eſpecially think upon?*

A. We ſhould meditate, 1. On the variety and greatneſs of them. 2. On the cauſe of them. 3. Chriſt's innocency and patience under them. 4. The excellent properties of them.

Q. *How ſhall we meditate on the variety and greatneſs of Chriſt's ſufferings?*

A. By taking a ſerious and fixed view of the many ſore calamities and diſtreſſes which he endured in this world, in his life, and at his death, both in ſoul and body.

1*ſt*, Think, how our glorious Redeemer was harraſſed and tempted by the devil forty days in a wilderneſs.

roaſted with the fire of divine vengeance, and found no pity nor abatement, Rom. viii. 32.

5thly, The acceptableneſs of them to God; a ſlain Chriſt was a 'ſacrifice of ſweet-ſmelling ſavour to God,' ſeeing it brought honour to his law, glory to his juſtice, praiſe to his mercy, and ſafety to his people, Eph. v. 2.

6thly, We ought to think upon the efficacy and benefit of Chriſt's ſufferings to us: ſo great is the efficacy and virtue of them, that they reach back to the beginning of the world, and extend forward to the end of it; and procure great bleſſings to his people in all ages. In a word, the wounds and ſufferings of Chriſt have an atoning, reconciling, healing, purifying, quickening and ſoftening virtue, which we ſhould often think upon.

Q. *How may we know, if we have an intereſt in theſe ſufferings of Chriſt, and if he died for us in particular?*

A. By theſe marks, 1 If we be his people, and willing to do and ſuffer what he would have us, Matth. i. 21. Pſalm cx. 3.

2dly, If we have an high eſteem of Chriſt and his ſufferings, 1 Cor. ii. 2. 1 Pet. ii. 7.

3dly, If we reject all other ſaviours, and deſire only to be ſheltered in Chriſt's wounds, and ſanctified by his blood, Hoſ. xiv. 3. Rev. i. 5.

4thly, If our hearts melt for piercing him, Zech. xii. 10.

5thly, If we be bent to kill ſin that crucified Chriſt, Gal. v. 24.

6thly, If we be friends and lovers of Chriſt, ready to obey his commands, John xv. 13, 14.

II. Concerning PRAYER.

Queſt. *WHY is prayer ſo needful before we approach to the Lord's table?*

A. 1. Becauſe prayer is a great mean on our part, for making up and preſerving our acquaintance with God, Job xxii. 1, 26, 27.

2dly, It is needful, both to ſanctify the ordinance to us, 1 us to the ordinance, 1 Sam. xvi. 5. 1 Tim. iv. 5.

3*dly*. It is the way to procure the Spirit's influences, for quickening grace, and enlivening us for duty, Cant. iv. 16.

4*thly*, Because no benefit can be expected by this ordinance without prayer, for it is the means appointed of God for obtaining all ſpiritual bleſſings, Ezek. xxxiv. 37. Matth. vii. 7. James i. 17.

Q. *What things ſhould communicants eſpecially pray for, before their partaking?*

A. 1. For pardon of the ſin of neglecting this ordinance formerly, and of unſuitable partaking of it.

2*dly*, For the preparation of our hearts for this ordinance, and for quickening all the ſacramental graces, particularly, faith, love, repentance, and hunger and thirſt for this ſpiritual feaſt, Pſal. x. 17. Prov. xvi. 1.

3*dly*, For pardon of all defects and ſhort-comings in our preparation, 2 Chron. xxx. 18, 19, 20.

4*thly*, For the Lord's gracious preſence both with miniſters and people, for communion with Chriſt in the ordinance, for the intimations of his favour, the breathings of his Spirit, and communications of his grace; that we, and many others, may be nouriſhed, ſtrengthened and comforted by his ordinance, Exod. xxxiii. 14, 18. Cant. iv. 18. Iſaiah lxiv. 1.

Q. *What kind of prayer is it, that will be effectual?*

A. 1. Humble prayer; we muſt level ourſelves with the duſt, when we ſpeak to the God of heaven; for it is ſuch prayers that he will regard, Gen. xviii. 27. Pſalm x. 17.

2*dly*, Prayer in faith; if we would prevail in prayer we muſt by faith eye the power, mercy and promiſe of God, and rely upon the mediation and righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt, in all our pleadings with God, James i. 6.

3*dly*, It muſt be fervent and importunate; as if it were the laſt prayer we were to put up, and the laſt ſacrament we were to ſee, and as if our lives and eternal well-being depended upon it, Gen. xxxii. 25, 26. Lam. iii. 41. Iſaiah lxiv. 7.

4*thly*, It muſt be argumentative; pleading the power of God, the mercy of God, his free promiſe, the blood of his Son, the glory of his name, our great miſery and neceſſity, Joſh. vii. 9. Pſalm xcix. 9. Dan. ix. 16, 17, 18.

Q. *But what if we have prayed and wreſtled, and yet the Lord ſhuts out our prayers, and gives no anſwer?*

A. 1. This is no ſingular complaint, for it hath been the

caſe of many of God's ſaints in former ages, Pſalm xxxi. 22. Lam. iii. 8, 44. Jonah ii. 4.

2dly, There is a great difference betwixt delaying, and denying of prayer, or betwixt God's ſuſpending the anſwer of prayer and his rejecting of it. For God, many times, for wiſe and holy ends is ſilent, and let's his people's ſuits depend long before he anſwer them; when yet in the mean time, he approves and accepts of their prayers, Luke xviii. 7. Matth. xv. 23, 28.

Q. *How ſhall we know that our prayers are not rejected, when yet we receive no anſwer to them?*

A. 1. When we are reſolved and enabled ſtill to wait upon God in the way of duty, though he hide himſelf from us, Iſa. vii. 17.

2dly, When we are enabled to clear and juſtify God in his dealings, and blame ourſelves only for the cauſe of his ſilence, Lam. iii. 39, 48. &c.

3dly, When we are helped to diſcover the failings and defects of our prayers, ſo as to be humbled for them, Iſaiah lxiv. 6, 7.

4thly, When we get the Spirit's aſſiſtance to ſtrengthen and enlarge our hearts in prayer, Pſalm cxxxviii. 3. Iſaiah lxv. 34.

5thly, When the Lord's ſuſpending his anſwer, makes us the more inquiſitive into our hearts, and ways, to find out the cauſe thereof, Lam. iii. 8, 40.

Q. *Wherefore is it, that the Lord delays to hear his people's prayers?*

A. For theſe ends; 1. To chaſten and humble them for their ſins, ſuch as, their ſloth and formality in duty, their ſelf-conceit, and leaning upon their performances, their neglecting the Spirit's motions, their want of ſuitable apprehenſions of God, and pure ends in prayer, their not joining ſuitable endeavours with their prayers, their not watching for a return, &c. Iſaiah lix. 2. Pſalm lxvi. 18. Iſaiah lxiv. 7. 1 Pet. v. 5. James iv. 3. Pſalm. v. 1.

2dly, For the manifeſtation of his own glory, particularly, for diſcovering his power and goodneſs in helping and delivering his people, when matters are brought to extremity with them, John xi. 5, 6.

3dly, For the trial and exerciſe of his people's graces, whether that the weakneſs of them may be diſcovered, or the in-

cerity of them evidenced. Particularly, the Lord's deſigns hereby,

1. To try our faith, if we will truſt him for what we ſee not, and believe he is ſtill as good as his word, though ſenſe ſuggeſt the contrary, Matth. xv. 27, 28. 2 Cor. v. 7.

2. To try our patience, if we be content to wait God's leiſure, and time of accompliſhing his promiſes, Heb. vi. 12. Heb. x. 36.

3. To try our love, if we will eſteem, and ſpeak well of Chriſt, even when he frowns or hides himſelf, Cant. v. 6, 10. Cant. viii. 7.

4. To try our conſtancy, if we will adhere to a withdrawing God, and perſevere in duty, when we have no ſenſible encouragement for it, Hab. iii. 17, 18.

4thly, God delays to anſwer his people's prayers, to advance their ſpiritual welfare, for hereby he keeps them humble and depending, quickens them to more fervency in prayer, and makes mercies more ſweet to them when obtained, 2 Cor. xii. 7, 8. Cant. iii. 1, 2. Matth. xv. 24, 27, 28.

Q. *What is our proper duty in ſuch a caſe, when God ſeems to ſhut out our prayers?*

A. 1. We ſhould ſearch for the Achan in the camp, and caſt out the accurſed thing, as ſoon as we find it. And if we cannot find it out, we ſhould go humbly to God, and cry, "Shew me, Lord, wherefore thou contendeſt with me?" Job x. 2.

2dly, Let us juſtify God in all his dealings towards us, and lay all the blame on ourſelves, Micah vii. 9.

2dly, Let us watch and look after our prayers, Pſalm v. 3.

4thly, Let us be diligent alſo in the uſe of all other means for obtaining our deſires, and go from one duty to another, Cant. iii. 1, 2.

5thly, We muſt reſolve to perſiſt in prayer, in midſt of all diſcouragements, and wait patiently on God, though it were to the laſt hour of our lives, Iſaiah viii. 17. Pſalm xl. 1.

Q. *Who are theſe, in a word, that are in a fit caſe to come to the Lord's table?*

A. All penitent believers, who have ſeriouſly conſidered the nature of the covenant of grace, with the ends and uſes of this ſacrament; and examined themſelves if they have unfeignedly conſented to the covenant, and ſtand to the conſent already given; live according to the covenant, in a ſober

righteous and godly life, repent ſincerely of all known falls and breaches, and continue not in any known ſin; aſk forgiveneſs of all they have wronged, and forgive theſe who have wronged them; ſtir up themſelves to the lively exerciſe of faith, and all the other ſacramental graces.

Concerning the DUTIES requiſite in partaking.

Queſt. *How ſhould we be employed when the time of partaking comes?*

A. I have already anticipated much that might be ſaid here, in opening the nature of this ſacrament, and ſhewing what is ſignified by the ſacramental elements, words, and actions, what is implied in the act of worthy communicating, and what is the bodily geſture requiſite therein: to which the reader is referred. Beſides which, I ſhall add ſome directions how we ought to be employed, when going to the Lord's table, and when we ſit down at it, and in the act of communicating.

Q. *How ſhould we be employed when going to the Lord's table?*

A. 1. We ſhould be thinking what a high privilege it is, that ſuch unworthy creatures as we ſhould be admitted unto ſuch near communion and fellowſhip with God.

2*dly*, We ſhould have awful impreſſions of the ſolemnity of the ordinance and greatneſs of the work we are going about; the great advantage of doing it right, and the great danger of doing it wrong.

3*dly*, We ſhould be thinking, this may be the laſt communion we ſhall ſee on earth, and the laſt offer we ſhall get of the water of life, in this manner; and therefore we ought carefully to receive and improve it.

4*thly*, We ſhould guard againſt wandering and impertinent thoughts, and labour to get our hearts wholly fixed on the great work in hand.

5*thly*, We ſhould be meditating on the unſearchable love of Chriſt, and his undertaking to ſuffer both the pains of death and hell for us, that were enemies to him.

6*thly*, We ſhould be meditating on the fulneſs and ſuitable-

neſs of the many ſweet offices and relations, which Chriſt bears to his people. Let us think on him, and go to him; as a ſurety, to pay our debt; as a phyſician to heal our diſeaſes; as a mediator, to make up our peace with God; as a ranſomer, to deliver us from captivity; as a refuge, to ſhelter us from danger: as a teacher, to open our eyes; as a bountiful friend, to give an alms, and ſatisfy our hunger; yea, as a loving huſband, to clothe us, enrich us, and provide for us, all we want.

Q. *How ſhould we be employed when we ſit down at the Lord's table?*

A. 1. We ſhould compoſe ourſelves into a ſerious frame and diſpoſition, agreeable to this ordinance.

2*dly*, We are to behold by faith, the affecting ſights repreſented to us in this ordinance.

3*dly*, Raiſe holy and ſuitable meditations from the ſacramental elements, words, and actions made uſe of, in the adminiſtration of this ordinance.

4*thly*, Exerciſe the graces in a lively manner, which are neceſſary in the act of communicating.

Q. *What is that ſerious frame or ſuitable diſpoſition of ſoul, which communicants ought to have when they ſit down at the Lord's table?*

A. We ſhould approach to God in this ordinance, and partake thereof; 1. With an holy awe and reverence of God; adoring his juſtice and holineſs, manifeſted in the ſufferings of Chriſt, 1 Sam. vi. 20. Pſalm v. 7. Heb. xii. 28.

2*dly*, With humble, low, and abaſing thoughts of ourſelves, and all that we can do, looking on ourſelves as poor and maimed, halt, blind and impotent, unworthy of the leaſt crumb, Luke xiv. 21. Iſaiah lvii. 15. James iv. 6, 10.

3*dly*, With ſtayedneſs and fixedneſs of thought, ſummoning all the faculties of the ſoul, and thoughts of the heart, to attend and keep cloſe to this momentuous affair, Eccleſ. v. 1. Pſalm cxviii. 27.

4*thly*, With holy confidence, as children ſitting down at their father's table, looking for, and expecting ſome gracious allowance from him, and believing that he would not give us ſtones, when we aſk bread, Matth. vii. 9. Heb. iv. 15, 16. Heb. x. 22.

5*thly*, With a ſharp and lively appetite after the ſpiritual benefits contained in this feaſt, earneſtly deſiring nearer com-

munion with God, and clearer tokens of his diſtinguiſhing love in Chriſt, Pſalm lxxxi. 10.

6thly, With burning love and affection to Chriſt, who purchaſed this feaſt and opened this fountain to us, and laid out the moſt precious treaſure of his blood to make us happy, Pſalm lxxiii. 25. Cant. v. 8.

7thly, In this ſuitable communion-frame, there ſhould be a mixture of holy mourning and rejoicing. 1. Mourning for ſin, when we call to mind the anguiſh of Chriſt's ſoul, the bruiſes of his body, and the effuſion of his blood for it. 2*dly*, Rejoicing in Chriſt Jeſus, as thoſe that are ſatisfied with his undertaking, are thankful for his coming, and wonder at the rich feaſt he has provided for us, Zech. xii. 10. Rom. v. 11. Phil. iii. 3. Pſalm xxii. 26.

Q. *What are theſe affecting ſights, ſet before the eyes of our faith, at the Lord's table, which we ought to contemplate, when we ſit down thereat?*

A. In general, Chriſt crucified is here evidently ſet forth, which is a moſt piercing and affecting ſight to the eye and heart of a believer, Gal. iii. i. Zech xii. 10.

More particularly, we may here ſee, 1. The great evil of ſin, that nothing could atone for, but ſuch a ſacrifice, and nothing can cure but ſuch a medicine.

2*dly*, The infinite juſtice of God, and his diſpleaſure againſt ſin, which nothing could pacify, but a ſatisfaction of an infinite value.

3*dly*, The greatneſs of the damned's miſery, who have God's juſtice to ſatisfy for themſelves for ever, without hope of any to be a propitiation for them.

4*thly*, The dreadfulneſs of that wrath which we deſerved and muſt have ſuffered, if no ſurety had interpoſed to ſuffer it for us.

5*thly*, The greatneſs of the love of Chriſt, who condeſcended to ſuffer both the pains of death and hell for ſuch vile creatures as we are.

6*thly*, The preciouſneſs of our ſouls, and the great value that Chriſt put upon them, and that he gave both his ſoul and body to be a ranſom for them.

7*thly*, The excellency and bleſſedneſs of pardon of ſin, t our infinitely wiſe Redeemer gave ſuch a price to obtain o us.

8*thly*, The worth of heaven and eternal glory, that could

be purchaſed at no lower rate, than the blood of the Son of God.

9*thly*, The riches and glory of the heavenly feaſt, where the ſaints ſee Chriſt as he is, and feed on him eternally, without ſigns or ſymbols.

10*thly*, The earneſt deſire Chriſt hath to engage ſinners hearts to him; in that he comes in the ſacrament, with his dyed garments to cover them, his wounds opened to ſhelter them, and his blood ſtreaming forth to cleanſe them.

Laſtly, We may here ſee our glorious Redeemer ſpoiling principalities and powers (conquering and diſarming our enemies, the law, Satan, death and hell) 'making a ſhew of them openly, and triumphing over them in his croſs,' Col. ii. 15.

Q. *What meditations ought we to raiſe from the ſacramental elements, words and actions, made uſe of at the Lord's table?*

A. I have already inſiſted on theſe more largely, when ſhewing the meaning and ſignification of them, from whence we may raiſe many ſuitable meditations. All I ſhall ſay now, ſhall be briefly ſummed up in theſe following things.

1. When we ſee the elements of bread and wine; let us think on the body and blood of Chriſt, as the only proper food and nouriſhment of the ſoul.

2*dly*, When we ſee the miniſter take the bread into his hand, to ſeparate it from common uſe; let us think on God's ſetting Chriſt apart by his eternal decree, and ſeparating him from all other men, to be our Mediator and Surety.

3*dly*, When the miniſter doth bleſs and conſecrate the elements; let us think on God's ſending his Son into the world, ſanctified and furniſhed with all gifts and graces needful for his mediatory office.

4*thly*, When we ſee the bread broken; let us meditate on the breaking and wounding of Chriſt's ſacred body on the croſs, and all the bruiſes, ſufferings and pains which he endured, both in ſoul and body, for our ſins.

5*thly*, When we ſee the wine poured out; let us think on the ſhedding of Chriſt's moſt precious blood, and on his willingneſs to pour out both his blood and ſoul unto death, to ſave us from eternal wrath.

6*thly*, When we ſee the miniſter offering and giving the elements to us; let us meditate on the infinite love of God the Father, in giving Chriſt to be our mediator; and of Chriſt

the Son, in giving himſelf to be a ſacrifice for us; and of the Holy Ghoſt, in revealing and applying Chriſt to us.

7*thly*, When the miniſter ſaith to us, 'Take, eat, drink 'ye all of it;' let us think, how freely God offers Chriſt to us, and how earneſtly he preſſeth us to accept of him as our Saviour.

8*thly*, When we ſee that there is both bread and wine provided for us in this feaſt; let us think on the plentiful redemption, complete nouriſhment, and fulneſs of grace, which we have in Jeſus Chriſt.

9*thly*, When we ſee that both of them are offered and given to us; let us think, that it is God's will that we ſhould ſtretch out the arms of faith, and embrace Chriſt wholly, in all his benefits, offices, laws and croſs.

10*thly*, When we ſee the bread and wine given ſeparately; we ſhould think how Chriſt's blood was ſeparated from his body, that we might not be ſeparated from God for ever.

11*thly*, When we ſee the elements divided and diſtributed among the communicants; let us think how Chriſt is really, though inviſibly, dealing forth the effects and benefits of his death and ſufferings to the worthy receivers.

12*thly*, When we are receiving and eating and drinking the bread and wine; we ſhould be meditating on the ſpiritual receiving and applying of Chriſt by faith, and the ſweetneſs and pleaſantneſs of the benefits of his death, and on the cloſe and intimate union that is betwixt Chriſt and believers.

13*thly*, When we feel the wine warming our cold ſtomachs; we ſhould meditate the more intenſely upon the warm love and blood of Chriſt, till once they warm our cold hearts and affections with vehement love and deſire to our Redeemer.

14*thly*, When we hear of Chriſt's dying charge 'to do this 'in remembrance of him;' and of his teſtament ſealed in this ſacrament; we ſhould affectionately remember the love of our dying Friend, and meditate on the precious legacies he hath bequeathed to believers. Of all which I have treated more largely.

Q. *Wherein doth the work of communicating chiefly conſiſt?*

A. Beſides what I have ſaid before on this head, I ſhall add theſe two things; 1. Upon God's part; communicating lyes in God's giving infeftment to the believer of Chriſt, and all his purchaſe, by the ſymbols of bread and wine. Chriſt doth here marry believers, and give himſelf to them in the re-

lation of a husband; and in token thereof, gives them, as it were, his ring or picture, and grants them the investiture and possession of his house and palace above, by delivering the key thereof into their hands; which upon their consent and acceptance, gives them as true right to Christ and all his purchase, as any man hath to an house or estate by an infeftment or sealed charter.

2dly, On the believer's part; communicating lyes mainly in their receiving the seal of God's covenant with them, and the seal of all his gracious promises to them in Christ; and particularly in laying hold and applying of Christ for pardon of sin, for cleansing from sin, and for strength to do every commanded duty; all which is promised in this covenant. So that the work of communicating doth not (as some are ready to think) lye principally in meditating upon Christ's love and sufferings, our engaging and covenanting to be the Lord's, making vows against sin, or putting up of prayers and requests to God. All these, indeed, ought necessarily to attend our communicating, but they are not the direct and principal acts of it. The nature whereof, as said is, consists mainly in our cordial receiving of Christ and his purchased benefits, as they are tendered in the covenant of grace, and sealed and applied in this sacrament: and in our believing that Christ's broken body and shed blood, here represented, with all his merits and graces, are as truly applied to us, for curing and saving our souls, and become ours by faith, as the consecrated bread and wine do enter into our bodies, and become ours by feeding thereon. And these acts are to be accompanied with the lively exercise of all the sacramental graces, particularly faith, repentance, desire, love, and joy.

Q. *How is faith to be exercised in partaking of the Lord's supper?*

A. Faith being as the eye of the soul, to discern Christ; as the hand of the soul to receive him; and as the mouth of the soul to feed on him in this ordinance, should be most actively employed and diligently exercised in our partaking; particularly in these acts.

1. In believing firmly the doctrine of the gospel, the truth of Christ's death, his redemption, and the world to come.

2dly, In looking unto Christ lifted up upon the cross, for healing to our souls maladies.

3dly, In fleeing into the open arms and wounds of a c

fied Jeſus, our bleeding high prieſt, for ſhelter and protection from wrath.

4thly, In embracing and claſping about this Redeemer as our ſouls up-making portion, ſaying with Thomas, 'My 'Lord and my God.'

5thly, In applying the blood and merits of Chriſt to ourſelves for ſtopping the mouth of conſcience, ſilencing the clamours and curſes of the law, and anſwering the accuſations of Satan.

6thly, In pleading his blood with a juſt and faithful God, for the pardoning of our ſins, the juſtifying of our perſons, the acceptance of our performances, the ſoftening of our hearts, the curing of our diſeaſes, the quickening of our graces, and ſanctifying of our ſouls.

7thly, In giving up our ſouls and bodies to Chriſt; to be ſaved by his blood, guided by his Spirit, ruled by his laws, and diſpoſed of by his providence; ſaying with the ſpouſe, 'My beloved is mine, and I am his.'

Q. *How is repentance to be exerciſed, in our partaking of the Lord's ſupper?*

A. By remembering our ſins, that pierced Chriſt, with holy ſhame and ſorrow, abhorring them, loathing and condemning ourſelves for them, firmly reſolving againſt them, and ſincerely purpoſing to follow Chriſt all our days in the ways of new-obedience.

Q. *How is holy deſire to be exerciſed, in partaking?*

A. In panting and breathing after the virtue and efficacy of Chriſt's blood, ſtill more and more; for ſubduing and killing of ſins and luſts, for enlivening our dead ſouls, and curing our heart-plagues, for quickening and ſtrengthening our weak and decayed graces, and for more intimate fellowſhip with Chriſt, and ſurer tokens of his ſpecial and diſtinguiſhing love.

Q. *How is love to Chriſt to be exerciſed, in partaking?*

A. By the outgoings of the heart and ſoul towards him, cloſely thinking upon his free love and the expreſſions of it, with wonder and admiration; highly eſteeming and prizing this glorious Redeemer, delighting in him, and cleaving to him, as our ſouls chief good and portion, and longing for the full enjoyment of him in glory.

Q. *How is holy joy to be exerciſed, in partaking?*

A. By the ſouls being cheared and lifted up in the believing view of its intereſt in Chriſt and his purchaſe, rejoicing in

God as its covenanted God and portion, ſhewing forth his praiſe, and magnifying him for redeeming love.

Q. *What ſhall theſe poor ſouls do, who in obedience to Chriſt's command, come to the Lord's table; but when they are ſet down at it, are wholly out of caſe (as they think) for the exerciſe of the foreſaid graces, being plagued with much deadneſs and confuſion, and likewiſe haraſſed with ſtrong temptations?*

A. It is indeed very afflicting and diſcouraging, when it is ſo with any poor exerciſed ſoul, and will occaſion many great thoughts and ſearchings of heart.

But, 1. If the diſorder of our hearts be our great grief and burden, and we deſire nothing more than a right frame of ſpirit, for remembering and receiving a dying Saviour in the ſacrament; it is a ſign of ſome ſpiritual life and feeling.

2*dly*, We would conſider, that it is no ſingular caſe, to be aſſaulted with temptations, at ſuch a juncture; for Joſhua the high-prieſt, when ſtanding before the Lord, had Satan at his right-hand to reſiſt him, Zech. iii. 1, 2.

3*dly*, If we feel much heart-deadneſs at ſuch a time, we ſhould ſend up ſome fervent ejaculations for the aſſiſtance and breathings of the Spirit to warm our hearts, and enliven our affections, Cant. iv. 16.

4*thly*, We ought to rouſe and ſtir up ourſelves, uſe quickening motives and arguments, and expoſtulate with our own hearts, and ſay, Oh I am lively enough in all my worldly concerns, which are but trifles; and ſhall I be dead and dull in this weighty affair, when the queſtion is, 'Whether I ſhall 'live in heaven or hell for ever?' What life and activity have many in the ways of ſin, and ſervice of the devil? and ſhall I be ſo dead in the ſervice of the living God? 'Oh my 'drowſy heart! Art thou not aſhamed to think ſo coldly on 'thy bleeding Saviour? Is Chriſt's heart ſo warm to thee, 'and thine ſo cold to him?' Thus all means muſt be uſed in dependance upon God; and ſo let us wait on him, and help will come in the time of need, Pſalm xxxi. 24. Pſalm xliii. 5. Pſalm. lvii. 8.

5*thly*, Let us hence ſee the more need of a crucified Jeſus, to quicken our dead hearts, and ſubdue our ſtrong temptations; and let us apply the more heartily to him in this ordinance, where he ſeats himſelf on a throne of grace, ready to anſwer his people's requeſts, and ſupply their needs. Let us draw life from his death, and quickening from his reſurrectio

And let us remember, it was Chriſt's ſpecial errand into the world, to bring abundant life to his people, and to deſtroy the works of the devil, John x. 10. John iii. 8.

Q. *What ſhall theſe do, who complain of ſuch wandering hearts, that they cannot get them ſtayed a moment upon one ſubject; and even when they are ſet down at the Lord's table, they find them hunting after vanity?*

A. 1. Let them groan under this before God, as a very grievous plague and affliction; for if ever there was a time when the heart ſhould be fixed, and the thoughts ſtayed, it ſhould be when we ſit down at the Lord's table, and have the great God to tranſact with.

2*dly*, Let us labour to over-awe our hearts with the deep apprehenſions of God's preſence and all-ſeeing eye, believing that God noticeth us now more than ever.

3*dly*, Let us cry for more love to Chriſt, and for further diſcoveries of his lovelineſs, and this would be a mean to fix the heart, 'For where the treaſure is, there will the heart be 'alſo.'

4*thly*, Let us chide and check our hearts for every vain excurſion, and ſay, 'O my wandering heart! did I come here 'to think on any thing but Chriſt and his love; is this a 'place for earthly trifles? Is this the way to ſhew forth my 'Redeemer's death? If I cannot watch with Chriſt one hour; 'how ſhall I dwell with him, and live in the contemplation 'of him for ever?

5*thly*, Let us preſent a crucified Chriſt to the eye of the mind, and ſtudy to hold this object ſtill in its view. And let us have the communicant's proper work deeply fixed in our minds and memories, and labour to keep the heart cloſe to its work, and even let 'us bind the ſacrifice with cords to the 'horns of the altar,' viz. the cords of ſtrong reſolutions and fervent ejaculations; and when thoſe birds of prey come down upon the ſacrifice, let us like Abraham, drive them preſently away, Gen. xv. 11. Pſalm cxviii. 27. Pſalm lxxxvi. 11.

Q. *Are not vows and prayers requiſite at the Lord's table?*

A. Yes; for here we are to profeſs our ſorrow for ſin, our thankfulneſs for God's favours, and join ourſelves to the Lord in an everlaſting covenant; and it certainly becomes all true penitents, thankful ſouls, and honeſt covenanters to make vows; and theſe vows are nothing worth without prayers to God joined therewith, for ſtrength to keep them. And theſe

vows and prayers ſeem to be moſt ſeaſonable after our receiving of the elements, and our exerting of the direct acts of communicating, Job xxxiv. 31, 32. Gen. xxviii. 20. John i. 16. Neh. x. 29.

Q. *What is the nature of theſe vows, which we ought to come under at this juncture?*

A. A religious vow is a ſerious oath of dedication of ourſelves to the Lord's uſe and ſervice; or, it is a ſolemn engagement and promiſe unto the Lord, whereby we bind and oblige ourſelves to be the Lord's dutiful children and ſervants, Numb. xxx. 2. 1 Chron. xv. 12, 13, 14, 15.

Q. *What is the neceſſity of making ſuch vows?*

A. 1. Becauſe God is pleaſed thus to bind himſelf ſolemnly to us, which ſhould draw out ſome anſwerable return from us to him, Heb. vi. 18. Pſalm cxix. 106.

2*dly*, That we may ſolemnly confirm and ratify what was done and engaged in our name at baptiſm: a bargain that is made for an heir, during his nonage, is to be confirmed by him when he comes to age.

3*dly*, That thereby we may give our ſolemn approbation and teſtimony to God's ways and ſervice as the beſt and moſt excellent.

4*thly*, That thereby we may engage our ſouls the more to ſtedfaſtneſs and conſtancy in duty, diſcourage Satan and our ſpiritual enemies, and prevent our backſliding, which we are naturally prone to, Hoſea xi. 7.

Q. *What are theſe things, which we ought to vow and oblige ourſelves unto, at the Lord's table?*

A. 1. That we will in the ſtrength of Chriſt keep ourſelves from all known ſin. 2*dly*, That we will make conſcience of performing all known duties, or in a word, that we will 'ceaſe to do evil, and learn to do well,' Iſaiah i. 16, 17.

Q. *What are theſe evils, that we ſhould mainly vow againſt, at the Lord's ſupper?*

A. 1. In general, we muſt vow againſt all ſin, as the traitor and murderer of the Lord of glory. If ever the ſoul take up a prejudice and antipathy againſt ſin, it ſhould be at the Lord's table, where the evil of it is ſo clearly diſcovered; then it is eſpecially, that we, by a ſolemn vow, ſhould caſt away all our tranſgreſſions, ſaying, with Ephraim, 'What 'have I to do any more with idols?' Hoſ. xiv. 8.

2*dly*, In particular, we ought to vow; 1. Againſt all groſs

ſins. 2. Againſt all ſecret ſins. 3. Againſt all heart-ſins. 4. Againſt our darling ſins, and theſe ſins that do moſt eaſily beſet us. 5. Againſt all temptations to ſin, and eſpecially the ſnares of bad company, Pſalm xxvi. 5. Pſalm cxix. 115.

Q. *What are theſe religious duties that we ſhould vow and bind ourſelves unto, at the Lord's ſupper?*

A. 1. In general we ought in the ſtrength of the grace of Jeſus Chriſt, ſolemnly to vow and promiſe, that we will mind religion as the one thing needful, and make the pleaſing of God the chief buſineſs of our lives; that we will give God, not only the outward man, but the heart in all our duties; that we will ſet the Lord always before us, and ſtudy to live a life of communion with God, and ſtill preſs forward to the full enjoyment of him above, Rom. xii. 11. Pſalm xvi. 8. Phil. iii. 13, 14.

2*dly*, In particular, we ſhould vow and bind ourſelves: 1. To the conſcientious performance of ſecret duties, which the eyes of the world cannot obſerve. 2. To theſe duties that contribute moſt to promote the life of religion, and bring us into communion with God. 3. To theſe duties that conſcience doth moſt accuſe of neglecting. 4. To theſe duties by which we may be moſt capable to advance God's glory, and the welfare of precious ſouls, and by which we may adorn our profeſſion, and make religion amiable in the eyes of ſtrangers; and eſpecially, that we will make conſcience of family religion, and ſtudy to recommend piety to our near relations, Gen. xviii. 19. Joſh. xxiv. 15. Pſalm ci. 2.

Q. *Is it a ſeaſon for communicants to be making requeſts, when they are at the Lord's table?*

A. Yes; for then we come to Chriſt in a good day, when there is plenty about his hand, when he hath on his dealing garments, and both his heart and hand are open to us. On this royal feaſt-day, he ſets himſelf upon a throne of grace, with a ſceptre of mercy in his hand, and waits for our addreſſes, and ſays, as the king to Eſther at the feaſt, 'What 'is thy petition?'

Q. *What are theſe particular ſuits, we ſhould be putting up, at the communion table?*

A. Our requeſts at that time, ſhould be ſuitable to the particular circumſtances and neceſſities of our ſouls, which are moſt known to ourſelves. Only in general, it is very proper at that time, to be putting up requeſts; for ſtrength to keep our

engagements and pay our vows; for the Spirit's influences to quicken us to liveliness of frame in this, and all duties, and to preserve liveliness in us; and likewise, for holy wisdom and skill, to improve Christ for righteousness and sanctification; for heart-holiness and grace, to subdue indwelling sin; for strength to grapple with temptations, and bear up under trials; for converting grace to our near relations: for the advancement of Christ's kingdom and interest through the world, and especially the land of our nativity, and the congregation we belong to: for persecuted Protestants, that are deprived of such gospel-feasts, &c.

Concerning the DUTIES requisite after Partaking.

Quest. *WHAT duties are required of us, after partaking of the Lord's supper?*

A. 1. To preserve and keep up a suitable frame of spirit, when we uprise and come away from the Lord's table.

2*dly*, To examine ourselves, when we go to our retiring places.

3*dly*, To order our conversation aright afterwards.

Q. *What is that suitable frame and disposition of spirit, which communicants ought to have, when they rise and come from the Lord's table?*

A. We ought to come away from this ordinance, 1. In an admiring frame. 2. In a thankful frame. 3. In a rejoicing frame. 4. In a humble frame. 5. In a watchful frame. 6. In a praying frame. 7. In a charitable frame. 8. In a willing and obedient frame. 9. In a fixed and resolute frame. 10. In a longing and heavenly frame.

Q. *What is it, that should be matter of admiration to us, when we come from the Lord's table?*

A. We should wonder at the goodness and condescension of God to us, that he should have had such thoughts of love to us; provided such a surety and sacrifice for us, as his own beloved Son; entertained us at his table; taken us into covenant and communion with himself, and given us earnests of the everlasting inheritance: and that he who is higher than the heavens should have done all this for creatures, who are

by nature, mean as worms, nay, polluted and loathſome in the ſight of God, Pſalm. viii. 4. Pſalm cxiii. 5, 6. 2 Chron. vi. 18. 2 Sam. vii. 18.

Q. *What is it that we ſhould be thankful for, when we come from the Lord's table?*

A. We ſhould be thankful to God, for his love in giving Chriſt; for Chriſt's love in giving himſelf; and for the love of the Holy Spirit in revealing Chriſt to us, and in us. Alſo we ſhould bleſs God for all the bleſſed fruits of this love, particularly for the well-ordered covenant of grace, and the ſeals of it; for pardon of ſin, and all the rich benefits ſealed to us at a communion-table. That we live in a Goſhen on earth, and have the proſpect of a Canaan above, Luke ii. 14. Eph. i. 3. 2 Cor. ix. 12, 15. Rev. i. 5. Deut. viii. 10.

Q. *What is it that we ſhould rejoice in, when we go from the Lord's table?*

A. 1. In the perſons of the glorious Trinity; in God the Father, as our covenanted God and portion; in God the Son, as our Saviour and Redeemer: and in God the Holy Ghoſt, as our comforter and ſanctifier, Pſalm xliii. 4. Rom. v. 11.

2*dly*, In the attributes and perfections of God; particularly in his goodneſs, mercy, wiſdom, almightineſs, immutability and faithfulneſs, as being all in confederacy with us, and engaged to promote our well-being and happineſs. Pſalm. civ. 34. Pſalm lxxiii. 25, 26. Pſalm xlviii. 14. Hab. iii. 17, 18.

3*dly*, We ought to rejoice in our Redeemer's love, his wonderful undertaking, and in the glorious victories and purchaſe he hath obtained for us, Phil. iii. 3. Luke i. 46, 47, 49, 50, 51.

4*thly*, We ſhould rejoice in the ways of God, having our hearts lifted up in them, and enlarged both to run and ſing in the ways of the Lord, and to go about every commanded duty with pleaſure, Acts viii. 39. 2 Chron. xvii. 6. Pſalm cxix. 32. Pſalm cxxxviii. 5.

Q. *Wherefore ſhould we come from the Lord's table in a humble frame?*

A. Becauſe we have manifold grounds for our humiliation before God at that time, when we conſider;

1. Our vileneſs by ſin, and our deſervings on that account, we have more reaſon to cry out, than Mephiboſheth had, when David promoted him to eat bread at his table; 'What

'is thy ſervant, that thou ſhouldſt look upon ſuch a dead 'dog as I am?' 2 Sam. ix. 8.

2*dly*, When we conſider the defectiveneſs of our preparation for this ſolemn ordinance; alas, our ſouls were 'not 'cleanſed according to the purification of the ſanctuary!'

3*dly*, When we conſider our great ſhort-comings in the near approach we were making to a holy God; namely, that our hearts were not more deeply affected with the great ſights preſented to our view, and the glorious things put in our offer at the Lord's table; that our dull affections were not more raiſed, our wavering minds more fixed, and our cold hearts more warmed, when we were about ſuch ſpiritual and heavenly work, 2 Chron. xxx. 18, 19.

Laſtly, We have cauſe to be humbled, when we conſider, that we are ſtill expoſed to many dangers, and environed with ſtrong enemies, who are never more buſy and active, than after we have been at the Lord's table, or admitted to nearneſs with God; and eſpecially when we conſider our own weakneſs and inſufficiency to grapple with them, Luke xxii. 31. 2 Cor. xii. 7, 8.

Q. *Wherefore ought we to come from this holy ordinance in a watchful frame?*

A. Becauſe of the many evils, ſnares and enemies, that we are then in hazard of; and therefore we muſt ſtand upon our guard and watch, particularly againſt theſe:

1. The malicious deſigns and devices of Satan, who is going about ſeeking to rob us of any benefit we have got by this ordinance, Luke xxii. 31. Math. xxvi. 41. 2 John 8.

2*dly*, We ought eſpecially to watch againſt the workings of ſpiritul pride, after this ordinance; for our wicked and deceitful hearts are moſt ready to be lifted up, with the great favours and honour here conferred upon us, Luke xxii. 24. 2 Cor. xii. 7. 2 Chron. xxxii. 25.

3*dly*, We ſhould guard againſt reſting upon the ſacrament, as if all our work were now done, and our warfare accompliſhed; No, we are ſtill in a military ſtate, and may expect new aſſaults from our ſpiritual enemies; we have ſtill the *good fight of faith to fight*, and the *work of ſalvation to work out*, which muſt be done with a conſtant holy *fear and trembling*, Cant. ii. 7, 8, Phil. ii. 12.

4*thly*, We muſt watch againſt the levity and wanderings of our hearts, that are prone ſoon to divert from the work we

have been about; and ſtudy to keep them cloſe in meditation upon a crucified Chriſt and the great ſights which we ſaw at a communion-table.

5*thly*, We ſhould watch againſt vain and frothy diſcourſe, and the ſnares of company after this ordinance; for hereby many have ſoon loſt that ſweet reliſh of the things of God, which they have had upon their ſpirits: wherefore it is much ſafer for communicants to retire for ſecret meditations, prayer and praiſe after this ſolemn work, than to be in the beſt of company.

6*thly*, We ſhould watch againſt the inroads of worldly cares and incumbrances, that they be not allowed ſuddenly to ruſh in upon us, to rob us of the ſpiritual frame and comforts we have been privileged with in this ordinance. We ought not haſtily to return to our worldly buſineſs after a ſacrament, but by degrees; and that with great tenderneſs, care and circumſpection; reſolving that Chriſt ſhall have the throne of the heart, and the world be kept at the foot-ſtool.

7*thly*, We ſhould carefully guard againſt all temptations to paſſion and raſh anger, and ſtudy to be meek and quiet under provocations; for if we give way to the diſorders and tumultuous paſſions of our hearts, the Holy Spirit will be grieved, and provoked to withdraw from us.

8*thly*, We ſhould watch againſt ſloth and formality in duty, and be endeavouring always to ſtir up ourſelves to livelineſs and ſpirituality in all our performances.

9*thly*, We muſt watch againſt relying on our own ſtrength in performing duty, and ſtudy to keep ourſelves conſtantly depending on Chriſt as our head of influences, and looking to him for our quickening and ſtrength.

Q. *Why ſhould we come from this ordinance in a praying frame? Do we need any thing more than God hath freely given us?*

A. Though all things needful be freely promiſed and ſealed to us in the ſacrament, yet we muſt continue to pray for the accompliſhment of theſe promiſes, Pſalm cxix. 49.

2*dly*, We muſt pray for the continuance of the Spirit's influences and grace to preſerve in us that tenderneſs of heart, armneſs of affection, and livelineſs of frame which have been wrought in us by means of this ordinance, 1 Chron. xxix. 8. Pſalm lxviii. 28.

3*dly*, We muſt pray for ſtrength to keep the promiſes, and

pay the vows which we have made to the Lord at this occaſion: and that God may ſave us from apoſtacy and backſliding, which our hearts are naturally bent unto, Pſalm xvii. 5.

Q. *Wherein lies that charitable diſpoſition which we ought to have, when we come away from the Lord's table?*

A. 1. In bearing a good will to the ſouls of all men, and heartily wiſhing their welfare, 1 Theſſ. iii. 5, 12, 15.

2*dly*, In having a true love to all the members of Chriſt's myſtical body, and bearing with them, though in ſeveral things they differ from us.

3*dly*, In a readineſs to relieve the poor and indigent, according to our ability, Gal. vi. 10.

4*thly*, In a diſpoſition to forgive thoſe that have been injurious to us. And ſurely all who have been ſharers of God's mercy and grace in the ſacrament, will come away from it, with ſuch a charitable diſpoſition.

Q. *What is that willing and obedient frame, which communicants ought to have, when they come from the Lord's table?*

A. It lies in theſe things; 1. A grateful ſenſe of the many ties and obligations we are under to ſerve him.

2*dly*, In making it our great ſcope and deſign to approve ourſelves to God in all things.

3*dly*, In making it our ſtudy to know God's mind and will, and what it is that is moſt acceptable and pleaſing to him.

4*thly*, In having an univerſal reſpect to all God's commands, and a readineſs of mind to every good work.

5*thly*, In being active and zealous for the glory of God and the intereſt of his kingdom among men.

Q. *What is that fixed and reſolute frame which they ought to have?*

A. It is the ſoul's deliberate and ſtedfaſt reſolution to adhere to Chriſt, his ways, and intereſt, in the midſt of all trials and difficulties. We muſt now be at a point in this matter, fully determined by the grace of God, to look and go forward in our Chriſtian courſe, and that no ſolicitation or temptation ſhall move us, either to look back, or draw back; but that 'with purpoſe of heart we will cleave unto the Lord,' Pſalm cxix. 30, 31, 115. Acts xi. 23.

Q. *What is that longing and heavenly frame, which we ought to have when we come from the Lord's table?*

A. It conſiſts in theſe things; 1. In a firm belief of Chriſt's ſecond coming, and of the life everlaſting.

2*dly*, In a lively meditation upon Chriſt's coming, and the future glory.

3*dly*, In an earneſt looking for that bleſſed hope, and a joyful expectation of the glory to be revealed, Tit. ii. 13. Rom. v. 2.

4*thly*, In a conſtant watching and preparing for the coming of the Bridegroom, Luke xii. 36, 37.

Q. *Are not our hearts prone to loſe their tenderneſs and ſpirituality after the ſacrament? How then ſhall we retain our livelineſs, and keep up in ſome meaſure our communion frame, even when the communion is over?*

A. 1. We muſt have deep impreſſions of the treachery and falſeneſs of our hearts, and of their woful natural bias to depart from God, and turn carnal, Hoſea xi. 7.

2*dly*, We muſt be humbled under a ſenſe of our own weakneſs and inſufficiency to preſerve our ſpiritual life, or ſo much as to think a good thought of ourſelves; for God gives grace to ſuch humble ſouls, 1 Pet. v. 4.

3*dly*, We ſhould be keeping up a conſtant thankful ſenſe of God's kindneſs to us at the ſacrament, and be frequently praiſing him for it; and this is an excellent way to engage the continuance of his mercies, Pſalm lxvii. 5, 6.

4*thly*, We ſhould be frequently thinking on theſe affecting ſights which we ſaw at the Lord's table, and ſtudy to keep up the impreſſions thereof on our minds. I made mention of theſe ſights before.

5*thly*, Let us ſtudy and learn the art of deriving life and influences from Jeſus Chriſt, by acting a conſtant and believing dependence on him, as our fountain of life, and head of influences, John x. 10.

6*thly*, Let us watch over our hearts and frames with much holy ſuſpicion and jealouſy, leſt Satan, the world, or our luſts ſhould rob us of the ſpiritual treaſure we have got. And eſpecially, let us watch againſt the firſt declinings of the heart, and beginnings of deadneſs, and preſently cry to the Lord for help and quickening.

7*thly*, Let us be much in ſecret prayer, pleading with God for the conſtant ſupplies of his Spirit, which is the fire that can only maintain warmneſs and livelineſs of frame in our ſouls, againſt all the cold blaſts of the devil, and the world.

8*thly*, Let us delight in the company and converſe of lively

Chriſtians; for one live-coal makes another to burn, Heb. x. 24.

9thly, Let us delight in attending ſacrament occaſions, and be ſtill longing for the returns of this quickening ordinance, and for the Lord's ſpecial preſence therein.

Laſtly, Let us always guard againſt theſe things that tend to deaden our hearts, or that may occaſion the loſing of our frames. And theſe I mentioned before, when treating on the cauſes of ſpiritual deadneſs.

Concerning SELF-EXAMINATION after the Sacrament.

Queſt. *WHAT is the neceſſity of ſelf-examination after the ſacrament?*

A. 1. Becauſe our Lord put his diſciples to the trial concerning their faith, after they had been at his table, John xvi. 31.

2dly, This is a neceſſary mean to bring us to humiliation and repentance, for the defects and ſhort-comings that have attended our communicating.

3dly, It is needful to keep people from deceiving themſelves, by thinking that they have true grace, and are in a happy ſtate, while in the mean time they are poor, wretched and miſerable.

4thly, Without it we cannot be thankful to God for the benefits we received in this ordinance; ſeeing it is by after-reflection, that we come to be ſenſible of the Lord's gracious dealings with us.

5thly, The neglect of ſelf-examination after the ſacrament, is the occaſion of many doubts and perplexities, that the Lord's people fall into after this ſolemn ordinance. Did we carefully remark the workings of our faith and love at the Lord's table, and the tokens of Chriſt's love we receive there, we might be enabled to reſolve many doubts, and repel many temptations, that otherwiſe will be too hard for us.

Q. *What are theſe things which we ought to examine ourſelves about, after we come from the ſacrament?*

A. Concerning two things; 1. How we have dealt with

God in this ordinance. 2. How God hath dealt with us. We ought narrowly to examine if we have dealt ſincerely and honeſtly with God in this ſolemn work; and if God hath dealt graciouſly and bountifully with us.

Q. *By what marks may we know, if we have dealt ſincerely and honeſtly with God, in this ſolemn ordinance?*

A. By theſe; 1. If we were meditating upon a crucified Chriſt at his table, with faith, love, mourning and thankfulneſs, ſincerely aiming and deſigning to keep up the remembrance of his matchleſs love, to ſhew forth his death till he come again; and were looking only to Chriſt for acceptance in the duty.

2*dly*, If it was our aim, when receiving the elements, believingly to accept of a bleeding Jeſus, as our High-prieſt, Saviour and Lord, and to apply his blood for anſwering all the exigencies and neceſſities of our ſouls.

3*dly*, If we ſincerely aimed to tranſact and ſeal a covenant with God through Chriſt, at his table, according as perſonal covenanting was explained before.

Q. *How may we know if we were ſincere in our tranſacting and covenanting with God?*

A. By theſe two things; 1. By reviewing the frame that our hearts were in, while we were a doing it.

2*dly*, By conſidering the diſpoſition of our ſouls ſince that time.

Q. *How ſhall we know if we had the right and gracious frame of heart, while we were tranſacting with God, which ſincere covenanters have?*

A. We may know it by theſe marks; 1. If we were low and vile in our own eyes, and deeply ſenſible of our unworthineſs to be received into covenant with God, Ezek. xvi. 62, 63.

2*dly*, If we were weary of the burden of ſin, and groaning to be delivered from it, Pſalm xxxviii. 3. Matth. xi. 28.

3*dly*, If we were longing and panting for Chriſt, as the only ſuitable help and remedy provided for us by God, without whom we could have no acceſs to God, no peace, no pardon, no grace, no glory.

4*thly*, If we found our hearts going out to God in Chriſt, as our God and portion, making choice of him, as our happineſs, chief good and end; and accepting of Jeſus Chriſt the only way to God.

5thly, If we are reſigning, and giving up ourſelves in all we are, and in all we have, unto God, to be governed, diſpoſed of, and employed according to his pleaſure, 2 Cor. viii. 5.

6thly, If we ſincerely renounced our own righteouſneſs, in the point of juſtification; and our own ſtrength in ſanctification, and the performance of duties; ſaying, 'In the Lord Chriſt 'only, we have righteouſneſs and ſtrength,' Iſaiah xlv. 24.

7thly, If we be ſincerely renouncing and parting with every ſin, and ſaying, with Ephraim, 'What have we to do any 'more with idols?' Hoſ. xiv. 8.

Q. *How ſhall we know, if the preſent diſpoſition of our ſouls be ſuch, as ſincere covenanters uſe to have, after their coming from the Lord's table?*

A. Let us try it by theſe marks; 1. If we can ſay, our ſouls have high and exalting thoughts of God whom we have choſen; and admiring thoughts of Chriſt the Mediator, as 'altogether lovely,' Iſaiah xxv. 1. 1 Pet. ii. 7.

2dly, If we be well pleaſed with the contrivance and deſign of the covenant, i. e. to have our ſins pardoned, and our ſouls juſtified and ſaved wholly by the righteouſneſs of our Redeemer, that free grace alone may eternally have the praiſe, Rev. i. 5. Pſalm cxv. 1.

3dly, If our hearts be melted for ſin, at the remembrance of the wounds of Chriſt, which were repreſented to us at his table as pierced and opened by our ſins; and be fully reſolved through his grace, that we will pierce him no more.

4thly, If indwelling ſin and heart-plagues be a greater burden to us than all the croſſes and troubles that we can meet with in the world, and that we are more deſirous to be rid of ſin, than of any affliction whatſoever.

5thly, If we are reſolved through divine ſtrength, to be a people zealous of good works, and to obey every commanded duty, John xv. 14. Tit. ii. 14.

6thly, If we are ſenſible of our own inſufficiency and weakneſs to keep covenant with God, and therefore are brought to renounce all confidence in ourſelves, and to ſay, 'In the Lord only, we have righteouſneſs and ſtrength,' Iſaiah xlv. 24.

7thly, If we can ſay, the world and its beſt things are, in our eyes, as dung and nothing, in compariſon of Chriſt an his righteouſneſs: and that we are more concerned to have

intereſt ſecured in him, to have heart-holineſs, and the image of Chriſt drawn in us; and that we deſire further degrees of grace, of faith, of love, and brokenneſs of heart for ſin; more than any honours, profits and pleaſures this world can afford: then ſurely theſe are good ſigns, that our hearts have been ſincere in covenanting with God.

Q. *Is not their caſe ſad, who, upon examination, may find that their hearts are not right with God, and that they have dealt falſely and hypocritically in this matter, and ſo have communicated unworthily?*

A. Yes, it is very ſad. For, 1. They have been guilty of diſſembling with the great God, in pretending to join themſelves in covenant with God, while they continue in league with the devil and ſin.

2*dly*, They have ſadly been deceiving themſelves, in pretending to come and receive the pardon of their ſins, while they never repented of them, nor deſigned to part with them; and ſo are in hazard of going to the grave with a lie in their right hand.

3*dly*, They have been crucifying Chriſt afreſh, and putting him to open ſhame, and the blood of Chriſt is crying for vengeance againſt them.

4*thly*, They have been eating and drinking damnation to themſelves, 'not diſcerning the Lord's body;' nor receiving him by faith.

Q. *Is there any help for theſe that are in this ſad caſe; and what is it that they ſhould do?*

A. 1. They ought to ſet their ſouls a trembling before God, for their condition is very ſad and highly dangerous.

2*dly*, They ſhould ſet their ſouls a wondering, that the Lord did not lay his hand upon them, and ſmite them dead with the bread in their mouth, or cup in their hand; or that he did not ſend them to hell, from the communion-table.

3*dly*, They ought to bleſs God that their caſe is not hopeleſs, or remedileſs like that of the damned; and that yet they are in the land of prayer and repentance, and have an offer of mercy and pardon through the blood of Chriſt.

4*thly*, They ſhould preſently go and weep and mourn over a ſlain Chriſt, whom they have pierced and crucified by their ſins, and particularly by their unworthy communicating. The advice which Peter gave to Simon Magus (whom he declared to be in the 'gall of bitterneſs, and bond of iniquity,' after

he had received the ſacrament of baptiſm) is very proper for them: 'Thy heart is not right in the ſight of God; repent 'therefore of this thy wickedneſs: and pray God, if per-'haps the thought of thy heart may be forgiven thee,' Acts viii. 21, 22.

5*thly*, They ought preſently to flee by faith to the blood Chriſt, which they have ſhed; and apply it for pardon and cleanſing: ſeeing nothing can waſh them from this guilt, but that very blood which they have ſpilt; and bleſſed be God for this efficacious remedy that can cure the deepeſt wound, and moſt deſperate diſeaſe; 'for the blood of Jeſus Chriſt clean-'ſeth from all ſin,' 1 John i. 7.

Q. *Ought we not alſo to examine and try how God hath dealt with us in this ordinance?*

A. Yes; we are not only to examine and try how we have dealt with God in this ſolemn ordinance; but alſo how the Lord hath been pleaſed to deal with us, that if we be ſenſible of his bountiful dealing towards us, we may be thankful for it; and if we be not ſenſible of it, that we may enquire into the cauſe, and be humbled before God.

Q. *May not ſome miſtake God's dealings with them in this ordinance, and make wrong concluſions thereanent?*

A. Yes; there is no doubt, but many miſtake and deceive themſelves in this matter; ſome concluding they have got real benefit by this ordinance, when they have got none; others, that they have got no good by it, when really they have, like thoſe mentioned, Prov. xiii. 7.

Q. *Who are theſe that deceive themſelves, thinking they have got benefit by the Lord's ſupper, when they have really got none?*

A. 1. Theſe who miſtake the common flaſhes of affection, which they may have on this occaſion, for ſpiritual livelineſs of ſoul, and the gracious influences of the Spirit.

2*dly*, Theſe who miſtake their ſeeming joy and delight, which they may feel at this time, for joy in the holy Ghoſt.

3*dly*, Theſe who take their deluſive and falſe peace, which they may have in their minds on this occaſion, for a true peace of conſcience.

4*thly*, Theſe who apprehend their temporary faith, counterfeit love, and their pangs of grief, tears and reſolutions, which they may attain to, at ſuch a time, to be true grace, and certain evidences of a gracious work of the Spirit; when

yet they are no more than what hypocrites may arrive to, without the aid of ſpecial grace.

Q. *How ſhall we diſtinguiſh the gracious livelineſs of believers, from the common flaſhes which hypocrites may have, at ſacraments?*

A. By theſe characters; 1. True livelineſs of ſoul ariſes from a gracious and renewed heart, influenced by the Spirit of God: but theſe common flaſhes may be, where there is no gracious change in the heart at all, being occaſioned only by outward things, ſuch as the external revelation of the great things done by Chriſt for loſt ſinners, the patheticknes or fervency of a miniſter, the lively repreſentation of Chriſt's ſuffe*ings, the example of others, or the like.

2*dly*, Gracious livelineſs humbles the ſoul, and inclines it to give all the glory to God: but common flaſhes do cheriſh pride, puff up the man to a conceit of himſelf, and to reſt upon his attainments.

3*dly*, Gracious influences of the Spirit leave ſome ſolid and laſting impreſſions upon the ſoul, and make a man tender and conſcientious in his after-walk: but common flaſhes are ſoon gone, leave no abiding impreſſions, and produce no gracious effects in the heart or life; but the man that hath them, turns as carnal and careleſs, hardened and profane as formerly, Pſalm lxxviii. 34, 37. 2 Pet. ii. 22.

Q. *How ſhall we diſtinguiſh betwixt the joy of believers, and that which hypocrites may have at communion occaſions?*

A. They differ in theſe things; 1. In reſpect of their antecedents; true joy follows after true ſorrow, and heart-brokenneſs for ſin: this hypocrites know nothing of, but believers do, Pſalm cxxvi. 5. Matth. v. 4.

2*dly*, In reſpect of their foundation; true joy is founded upon the promiſes and the Mediator of the covenant, and ſprings from a gracious diſcovery of redeeming love, and our intereſt therein. But the hypocrite's joys are built on a falſe and ſlippery foundation, Matth. xiii. 20, 21. Phil. iii. 3. Rom. v. 11.

3*dly*, They differ in reſpect of the matter of them; hypocrites joys are only terminated upon the external part of duties and ordinances; but the believer's joy is upon the account of God's preſence in them. The hypocrite rejoiceth not in Chriſt's ways and ordinances, as they are means for

enjoying communion with him, but only as they ſatisfy conſcience, and get them the applauſe of men.

4thly, They differ in their fruits and effects. 1. True joy abaſeth, but the hypocrite's joy puffs up the heart. 2. True joy makes the believer's heart burn in love to Chriſt, and to have a very high eſteem of him; but the hypocrite's joy hath no ſuch effect. 3. The Spirit of ſanctification, and endeavours after holineſs, do always attend joy in the Holy Ghoſt: But, notwithſtanding of the hypocrite's joys, the heart is ſtill carnal and the life unholy, Rom. xiv. 17. 4. Spiritual joy doth encourage and ſtrengthen the ſoul for duty, particularly, for attending ordinances, bearing afflictions, and reſiſting temptations, Neh. viii. 10. Iſaiah xl. ult. But the hypocrite's joy produceth no ſuch fruits.

Q. *How ſhall we diſtinguiſh betwixt a falſe and deluſive peace, which ſome may have after a ſacrament, from a true peace of conſcience?*

A. They differ mainly in two reſpects; 1. In reſpect of their antecedents and cauſes. 2. In reſpect of their conſequences and effects.

Q. *How do they differ in reſpect of their antecedents and cauſes?*

A. 1. A falſe peace of conſcience, which hypocrites have, doth ordinarily flow from theſe ſprings. 1. From the flattery and deceitfulneſs of our own hearts, that are bent to ſpeak peace to us, when there is no peace from God. 2. From the deluſions and ſuggeſtions of Satan; ſometimes he keeps the houſe as a ſtrong man armed, and ſo all is at peace: at other times he is fain to make uſe of his cunning artifices for that end; he flatters the ſinner, blinds the mind, dazzles the eyes with falſe appearances, and ſometimes ceaſeth from tempting, and ſo he goes out, when he is not caſten out, Matth. xii. 43, 44. 3. This falſe peace proceeds from a man's miſtaking of his ſoul's ſtate and condition, thinking himſelf ſomething, when he is nothing; apprehending conviction to be converſion, legal ſorrow to be repentance unto life, common flaſhes and ſtirrings in the affections to be the ſpecial influences of the Spirit.

4thly, From too high an opinion of our duties and performances, as if theſe were ſufficient to ſatisfy God's juſtice, and recommend us to him.

5thly, From outward favourable providences, and worldly

proſperity, as if theſe things were a certain ſign of God's ſpecial love. But,

II. True peace of conſcience, which is wrought by the Spirit of God in the believer, doth ſpring from other cauſes and antecedents; ſuch as theſe,

1. From a true faith in Jeſus Chriſt our peace-maker, Rom xv. 13.

2*dly*, From a true love to God and his law, Pſalm cxix. 165.

3*dly*, From a tender and conſcientious walk, Gal. vi. 16.

4*thly*, From a view of our covenant relation to God, and gracious nearneſs to, and communion with him in duty, 2 Sam. xxiii. 5. 1 Sam. i. 18.

5*thly*, Solid peace of conſcience commonly follows upon an inward ſoul-conflict, and deep humiliation and trouble for ſin, Pſalm cxlvii. 4. Iſa. lvii. 15. Iſa. lxi. 3.

6*thly*, It ordinarily follows upon fervent wreſtling with God by prayer, and upon the diligent uſe of all the other means and ordinances of God's appointment, 1 Sam. i. 18. 2 Theſſ. iii. 16.

Q. *How do a true and falſe peace of conſcience differ, in reſpect of their conſequents and effects?*

A. I. A falſe peace hath ordinarily ſuch things attending or following upon it, as theſe:

1. It doth not incline the ſoul to be low in its own eyes, and to exalt Chriſt and free grace; but rather to exalt ſelf, and lean upon duties and attainments.

2*dly*, It doth not determine the heart to hate ſin, and love duty, or influence a man to a holy walk and converſation; but rather to ſeparate what God hath joined together, viz. holineſs and peace, Deut. xxix. 19.

3*dly*, A falſe peace cannot ſupport a man, when outward comforts are withdrawn, but leaves him comfortleſs in the day of affliction.

4*thly*, It makes a man unwilling to be ſearched and tried by the light of God's word, John iii. 20. But,

II. A true peace of conſcience hath ſuch conſequents and fruits as theſe;

1. It makes the man to have an high eſteem of Jeſus Chriſt, who is our peace, and to count all things as loſs and dung beſide him.

2*dly*, It makes a man content with that lot and condition

in the world, which the Lord thinks fit to carve out for him.

3*dly*, It compoſes and cheers the heart in time of the greateſt dangers and difficulties, and when all worldly comforts do fail; Hab. iii. 17. John xvi. 33. Pſalm iv. 7, 8.

4*thly*, It makes a man active for God's glory, and the intereſt of religion, Pſalm li. 12, 13.

5*thly*, The man that hath it, doth not ſhun the light, but is willing to be tried by it, Pſalm cxxxix. 23.

6*thly*, He guards againſt the temptations of Satan, the riſings of corruption, the out-breakings of ſin, and every thing that tends to diſturb his peace.

Q. *How may we know, that the faith, whereby we were receiving and apprehending Chriſt in the ſacrament, was a true and ſaving faith, and not a temporary faith which hypocrites may have?*

A. By taking a view of the different properties and effects of a temporary and ſaving faith.

I. As for a temporary faith, it hath theſe following.

1. It only gives a ſeeming conſent to Chriſt, like the ſtony-ground hearers, and almoſt perſuades them to be Chriſtians: but doth not prevail with them cordially to accept of Chriſt, both as a Saviour and Lord.

2*dly*, It doth not make them part wholly with their own righteouſneſs for Chriſt's righteouſneſs, but ſtill they continue upon their legal foundation, and reſt upon their own doings.

3*dly*, It never brings a man the length, to reſign himſelf, and his moſt valuable intereſts and concerns in the world, to Jeſus Chriſt, to be diſpoſed of by him, as he thinks fit: but ſtill ſome Agag or other muſt be reſerved.

4*thly*, It never brings a man to apprehend Chriſt as matchleſs and altogether lovely, and to be willing to ſuffer the loſs of all things for him; but ſtill there is ſomething the hypocrite prefers unto Chriſt. But,

II. A true faith determines the ſoul to embrace Chriſt wholly in all his offices; it makes a man part entirely with his own righteouſneſs, and cry, 'none but Chriſt.' It makes him give up himſelf wholly to Chriſt, to eſteem Chriſt as exceeding precious, to ſtudy to raiſe his honour, advance his intereſt, and oppoſe his enemies, and to do every thing that is well pleaſing in his ſight.

Q. *How ſhall we know, if the love we were expreſſing*

Chriſt at his table, be true and ſincere, and not a counterfeit love, ſuch as hypocrites may have?

A. 1. The hypocrite's love is ſelfiſh, he loves Chriſt, becauſe he apprehends that Chriſt loved him, laid down his life for him, and hath purchaſed great happineſs to him; but he doth not love him for his own intrinſic beauty and excellency. Again, the hypocrite's love is not ſuperlative, he loves him not above all things in the world, his love doth not prompt him to all that Chriſt commands, and to undertake theſe duties that are moſt difficult and ſpiritual: it doth not make him thirſt for nearneſs to him in ordinances, and long to ſee him, and dwell with him in glory. But,

2dly, True love to Chriſt, makes the believer do all theſe, it makes him deſirous of his preſence, zealous of his intereſts, concerned for his people, and afraid to diſpleaſe him. It makes the believer have common friends and common enemies with Chriſt; love what he loves, and hate what he hates, rejoice when he is glorified, and grieve when he is diſhonoured; it makes him deſire conformity to him, and love holineſs, becauſe it is his image; and alſo to long to be with him above, where he ſhall be like him, and ſee him as he is.

Q. *How ſhall we know if theſe pangs of grief and tears, which ſome attain to in this ordinance, be hypocritical ſorrow, or repentance unto life.*

A. 1. There is no doubt but hypocrites, and theſe whoſe hearts were never truly broken for ſin, may ſhed tears, and have ſome pangs of ſorrow at ſuch an occaſion; but then, it is certain; their ſorrow doth not proceed from an internal principle, or a ſpecial diſcovery of the evil and hateful nature of ſin; but only from external motives and conſiderations, ſuch as theſe, the conſideration of the ſolemnity of this ordinance, the great danger of unworthy partaking, the hearing of a pathetic ſermon, or a fervent repreſentation of Chriſt's ſufferings, the example of others weeping beſide them, a view of the ſad effects of ſin, as it expoſes the ſinner to infinite wrath, and ſhuts out from eternal happineſs. Theſe things, I ſay, may occaſion ſome pangs of ſorrow and tears in natural men, at a ſacrament, and eſpecially in theſe who are endued with ſomething of a natural compaſſion and ſympathy, which diſpoſes them to relent and weep at the hearing of any tragical ſtory, or beholding any pitiful ſpectacle. All this may be without any ſpecial operation of the Spirit of God, or real

change on the heart; the hearts of natural men are like the ſtones, which are wet by the rain, but not ſoftened. But,

2*dly*, That repentance which is true and ſaving, makes the ſoul to mourn for ſin, upon the account of its intrinſic evil, becauſe it highly diſhonours God, abuſes the goodneſs of the Father, wounds a loving Redeemer, grieves the Spirit of grace, defiles the precious ſoul, defaces the image of God, and debars from communion with him. It makes the ſoul to mourn for heart-ſins, as well as outward ſins, and long earneſtly for more heart-purity, and a total deliverance from ſin.

Q. *How ſhall we diſtinguiſh theſe purpoſes and reſolutions which hypocrites may put on at a ſacrament, to walk religiouſly and circumſpectly; from the ſincere reſolutions of true believers?*

A. 1. Hypocrites purpoſes and reſolutions are not cordial and deliberate, but haſtily taken without conſideration; they are not made in faith, and with ſelf-denial and dependence on Chriſt; but taken on in their own ſtrength. Their reſolutions are not ſincere and univerſal, againſt all known ſin, and for all known duty; but only againſt ſome particular ſins, and for ſome particular duties. They proceed not from a principle of heart-love to God and holineſs, but only from legal terrors and apprehenſions of wrath.

Laſtly, They are not continuing, for they are only taken on in a fit, and ſoon evaniſh. But,

2*dly*, Believers reſolutions are cordial and deliberate, humble and ſelf-denied, ſincere and univerſal, and make abiding impreſſions on the ſoul. They proceed from heart-love to God, a deep conviction of the evil and danger of ſin, and a gracious diſcovery of the beauty and excellency of holineſs. They are made in an humble ſenſe of their own weakneſs, wholly diſtruſting their own power, and relying entirely upon the grace and ſtrength of Chriſt their ſurety, according as it is promiſed to them in the covenant of grace, Pſalm lxxi. 16.

Q. *Are there not ſome ſincere ſouls who miſtake the Lord's dealing with them, and think they have got no benefit by the ſacrament, when they really have?*

A. Yes; for there is a difference betwixt real communion with Chriſt, and ſenſible communion with him; the two diſciples going to Emmaus had the firſt, but wanted the latter; they converſed with Chriſt in the way, but knew him not; So God's people may ſometimes get ſpecial tokens of his bounty at the ſacrament, when they are not ſenſible of it.

and may have ground to ſay, as Jacob did of Bethel, 'Sure-'ly God was in this place, and I knew it not,' Gen. xxviii. 16.

Q. *What may be the reaſons of their miſtake?*

A. 1. Some may think they have got no good at the ſacrament, becauſe they have not got that which they particularly expected and looked for, though perhaps, God hath given them ſomething in lieu of it, that is neceſſary and fit for them.

2*dly*, Some may reckon they have got no good, becauſe they have not got ſo much as others; or perhaps as they themſelves have felt at former occaſions: they too much overlook and undervalue the crumb God hath given them, becauſe of its ſmallneſs; though ſurely the leaſt token of his favour ſhould be highly prized, and thankfully received, as being far greater than they deſerve.

3*dly*, Some may think they have got no good, becauſe they did not ſenſibly perceive it, when they were at the Lord's table, or immediately thereafter; but we muſt know that a ſovereign and wiſe God will not be limited but take his own time and way, to make his people ſenſible of theſe things that are freely given them at his table.

Q. *What is the reaſon that ſo many of the Lord's people complain, they get little or no benefit by this ſolemn ordinance, that they came expecting to meet with Chriſt at his table, but alas, they return diſappointed?*

A. 1. Sometimes the Lord may hide himſelf from his people, for his own holy and wiſe ends; that he may try them, how they will behave in his abſence; that he may humble them under a ſenſe of their own weakneſs; and that he may excite them to greater earneſtneſs and fervency in ſeeking after him. But,

2*dly*, The ordinary cauſe of God's dealing ſo with any, is for ſomething in themſelves: Either, 1. They have not been at all due pains in preparing themſelves before they came to this ordinance. Or, 2. They have truſted too much to their preparation, and pains they were at, expecting that this would make them acceptable to God, and merit ſomething at his hand. Or, 3. Their appetites were not ſharpened enough for this feaſt, they had not ſuch a ſenſe of wants and plagues, as was needful. 4. It may be they reſted more upon the ordinance itſelf, or the miniſter that diſpenſed it, than upon the

author and inſtitutor of it. 5. Perhaps there was ſome leaven in the houſe, or Ahan in the camp, I mean, ſome ſecret luſt or idol, which was unhumbled for, or uncaſt out of the heart, for which God may be chaſtiſing them. 6. It may be, they have not readily hearkened to Chriſt's knocks, nor opened the door preſently when he came to it, for which Chriſt is ſometimes provoked to depart, as Cant. v. 2, 3, 6.

Q. *What courſe ought theſe to take, who complain they find no benefit in this ordinance?*

A. 1. They ought always to juſtify Chriſt in his dealings, and never blame him, who is certainly a gracious and bountiful Saviour, and delights in mercy.

2dly, They ſhould only blame themſelves for it, and diligently ſearch for the cauſe of their diſappointment in themſelves, and cry with Job, 'Shew me wherefore thou contendeſt with me, make me to know my tranſgreſſion and my ſin.'

3dly, When the ſin is found out, they ſhould humble themſelves for it, mourn over it before the Lord, and flee to the blood of Chriſt for pardon.

4thly, They ſhould long for another communion occaſion, prepare for it more diligently and ſelf-deniedly, watch more carefully over their hearts, and ſeek Chriſt more earneſtly than before; reſolving ſtill to look to him, wait for him, and lye at his feet; pleading his power, mercy and faithfulneſs to the very laſt.

Q. *How may we know if the Lord hath dealt bountifully with us in this ordinance?*

A. The Lord deals bountifully with his people in this ordinance, when he viſits them with his gracious preſence, draws nigh to them by his Spirit's operations, and vouchſafes to hold communion with them.

Q. *Are not God's people always near to God, and he to them; and doth not his Spirit ſtill dwell in them?* Pſalm xxxiv. 18. and cxlviii. 14. John xiv. 16, 17. *How then doth God draw nigh to them with his gracious preſence and Spirit in the ſacrament?*

A. 1. We muſt diſtinguiſh betwixt a ſtate of nearneſs, and acts of nearneſs. Believers, by converſion and faith in Chriſt, are brought into a ſtate of nearneſs to God, in ſo far as they are brought into favour and friendſhip with God, get the image of God drawn upon their ſouls, and the Spirit of God

dwell in their hearts. But it is in worſhip, that believers attain to acts of nearneſs and communion with God.

2dly, There are ſome ſpecial acts of nearneſs to God in worſhip, that believers only attain to at ſome times, for God is nearer to them in ſome duties than others; as he allows them more of the evidences of his favour, and of the influences of his Spirit, at one time than another.

3dly, Though God be always near to his people in reſpect of his Spirit's inhabitation; yet, not always in reſpect of his ſenſible operation. Though Chriſt doth ſtill dwell in the heart, by his Spirit, yet he doth not always act alike in the ſoul, but only according to his good pleaſure.

4thly, God is always near his people, by theſe operations and influences of his Spirit, which are neceſſary, for preſerving the being of grace in them; but not always near by theſe influences, which actuate and enliven grace, and give them ſuitable conſolations.

Q. *How is it that God draws nigh to his people by his gracious preſence, and holds communion with them by the ſpecial operations of his Spirit?*

A. He draws nigh and communicates himſelf to his people, by his ſpiritual influences; 1. Of light. 2. Of life. 3. Of ſtrength. 4. Of comfort.

Q. *How is it that he draws nigh to his people with his influences of light, in this ordinance?*

A. By giving them gracious and ſatisfying diſcoveries of God, and Chriſt, and ſpiritual objects: As,

1. When he gives them ſuch a view of God's glory in his attributes and perfections, as makes deep impreſſions on their hearts: As, 1. When he lets them ſee the greatneſs and majeſty of God ſo as to fill them with holy fear and reverence of God, and humble them under a ſenſe of their own nothingneſs before him. 2. When he ſhews them the infinite holineſs and purity of God, ſo as to humble them under a ſenſe of their own vileneſs and ſinfulneſs in his ſight, and make them cry with Iſaiah, 'Wo is me, I am undone, I am unclean,' &c. Iſaiah vi. 5. 3. When he makes his goodneſs and mercy paſs before them, proclaiming his name in their hearing, 'The Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-ſuffering, and abundant in goodneſs,' &c. Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7. So as to ſet them a wondering at God's free grace and good-

neſs, in pitying wretched rebel-ſinners, and finding out a way for their recovery.

II. When he diſcovers in us the glorious divine attributes ſhining forth in a crucified Saviour. As, 1. When he lets us ſee the infinite juſtice and mercy of God illuſtriouſly diſplayed, yea, meeting together, and ſweetly reconciled in the death and ſufferings of Jeſus Chriſt.

2*dly*, When he lets us ſee the divine power and ſtrength treaſured up in a crucified Jeſus; and that he is able to draw our dead ſouls out of the grave, though our ſins were as mountains of lead to hold them down. That he is able to kill our luſts, though every one of them were like Goliah for ſtrength. That he is able to cleanſe our ſouls, though every one of our ſins were red as crimſon. That he is able to bear us up, bring us through, and keep us by his power through faith unto ſalvation, though of ourſelves we be weak and unſtable as water.

3*dly*, When he lets us ſee the infinite goodneſs and mercy of God laid up in a crucified Chriſt, that he is not only able, but moſt willing, compaſſionate, and ready to ſave and pity helpleſs ſinners; ſo as our hearts are melted by the diſcovery, and made to ſay, we will never again have uncharitable thoughts of Chriſt, we will never ſay, he is cruel or hard hearted to a periſhing ſinner; for we ſee he is all made up of bowels and tender mercies.

4*thly*, When he lets us ſee all the divine fulneſs dwelling in a crucified Redeemer. 1. That there is a fulneſs of grace in our Mediator, anſwerable to our ſoul's wants and miſeries; a fulneſs of light for our darkneſs; a fulneſs of life for our deadneſs; a fulneſs of ſtrength for our weakneſs; and a fulneſs of merit for our guiltineſs. 2. That there is in him a fulneſs and ſuitableneſs of offices: being conſtituted of God, to be a Prophet to cure our ignorance; a Prieſt to atone for our guilt; and a King to reſcue us from the bondage of our enemies. 3. That there is in him a fulneſs and ſuitableneſs of relations; that he ſtands in the relation of a Phyſician, to cure our diſeaſes; of an Advocate, to plead for our acceptance with God; of a Surety, to clear our old accounts and arrears; of a Shepherd, to ſeek the loſt ſtraying ſheep; of a Brother and Friend, to agent our cauſe with God, when we are incapable to act for ourſelves.

III. When he lets the ſoul ſee that Jeſus Chriſt is not only

a great and glorious Saviour in himſelf, but that he is our Saviour; when he clears up to us the evidences of our intereſt in him; ſo that we are in caſe to ſay with Job, 'I know 'my Redeemer liveth;' and with Paul, 'I know in whom I 'have believed.'

IV. When he lets us ſee the intrinſic evil and vileneſs that is in ſin, and gives us ſuch a diſcovery of it, in the glaſs of Chriſt's ſufferings, as makes us to ſee its monſtrous deformity, and God-provoking nature; and alſo to loath ourſelves, becauſe of our abominations.

V. When he lets us ſee ſuch a beauty in holineſs as it is the image of God, and that which makes us to reſemble him, as cauſeth our ſouls to thirſt for further degrees of it.

VI. When he gives us a heart-engaging view of the fulneſs, ſuitableneſs, freeneſs, ſureneſs, order and excellency of the new-covenant and its promiſes; that it is Chriſt's bleſſed teſtament and latter-will to his people, containing and bequeathing many rich and precious legacies to them; all which are ratified and ſealed to them in the Lord's ſupper.

VII. When he gives us a convincing view of the emptineſs of the world, and the inſufficiency of all creatures to help a ſinner, or ſatisfy the deſires of an immortal ſoul; ſo that we are fain to betake ourſelves to Chriſt as our all-ſufficient help, and cry, 'None but Chriſt.'

VIII. When he gives a ſoul-raviſhing diſcovery of the things that are unſeen in the other world, the glory of heaven, and the inexpreſſible happineſs of the ſaints that dwell there; ſo as to make us long for the finiſhing of our pilgrimage, that we may depart and be with Chriſt.

Theſe, and ſuch like diſcoveries, doth the Lord oftentimes make by his Spirit to his people, in this ordinance; by opening their underſtandings to ſee divine things in another way, than ever they ſaw before.

Q. *How is it that the Lord draws nigh, and communicates himſelf to his people in the ſacrament, by the influences of life?*

A. By ſending his quickening Spirit to put life in their graces, and to draw them forth to a lively exerciſe; particularly, 1. When he actuates their faith, and enables them to go out to Chriſt, lay a burden of their ſins upon him, and lean wholly to him for pardon and ſalvation.

2*dly*, When he quickens repentance, and makes the heart to melt into tears and godly ſorrow for ſin.

3*dly*, When he kindles love in the heart, and makes it to burn, while he talks with them, and opens to them the ſcriptures.

4*thly*, When he draws out the deſires and pantings of their ſouls towards Chriſt, and makes them hunger and thirſt for God, and follow hard after him.

5*thly*, When he quickens the ſpirit of prayer in them, and makes them more fervent and lively in pouring out their hearts to God, and cauſes them to take delight in the duty. Thus the Lord draws nigh to his people in the ſacrament, by enlivening their ſouls in the exerciſe of grace; but ſeeing I have treated of this livelineſs more particularly before, and given marks for the trial of it, I ſhall add no more upon this head.

Q. *How is it that the Lord draws nigh, and communicates himſelf to his people, in this ordinance by his influences of ſtrength?*

A. He doth it by the operations of his Spirit in their ſouls; theſe ſeveral ways;

1*ſt*, When he ſeaſonably ſteps in, and ſupports their weak faith, ſtaggering hope, and fainting hearts, when ready to ſink with fears and diſcouragement, Iſa. xli. 10.

2*dly*, When he encourages them to undertake, and enables them to perform the hardeſt and moſt difficult duties, not only to attend all public ordinances; but even to make conſcience of ſecret prayer, meditation, mourning over ſin, mortification, &c. Iſa. xl. 24.

3*dly*, When he enables them, not only to perform duty, but even to do it with delight and activity; counting it their meat and drink to do God's will, and reckoning one day in his courts worth a thouſand elſewhere.

4*thly*, He ſtrengthens his people at the ſacrament, by enabling them to conquer and ſubdue their ſtrong luſts and corruptions, that formerly were too hard for them.

5*thly*, He doth it by enabling them to reſiſt all temptations, and get the victory over Satan, Luke xxii. 31.

6*thly*, By heartening them to a patient bearing of the croſs, and all theſe afflictions and burdens that the Lord thinks fit to lay upon them, Pſalm cxxxviii. 3.

Q. *How is it that the Lord draws nigh to his people in the ſacrament, by his influences of comfort?*

A. 1. By clearing up the evidences of their graces to them; ſo that they are made to ſee, that they have true grace wrought in them, by the Spirit of God. Before they queſtioned if they had any faith; but now they can ſay with that poor man in the goſpel, 'Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief;' before, they doubted if they had any love to Chriſt: but now they are helped to ſay with Peter, 'Lord, thou that knoweſt 'all things, knoweſt that I love thee.'

2*dly*, He comforts them, by clearing up to them, their intereſt in the great and precious promiſes; and in Jeſus Chriſt the author of them, and his glorious purchaſe; ſo that they are enabled to ſay with the ſpouſe, Cant. ii. 16. 'My be-'loved is mine, and I am his;' and neither ſin nor death will diſſolve this ſweet relation, Rom. viii. 35, 38. and this gives them very ſtrong conſolation.

3*dly*, He comforts them in the ſacrament, by intimating to them, the pardon of their ſins, and a free diſcharge of all their debt, graciouſly whiſpering by his Spirit into the ear of the ſoul, ſuch a word as that which Chriſt ſpoke to the man ſick of the palſy, 'Son, be of good cheer, thy ſins be for-'given thee,' Matth. ix. 2.

4*thly*, He comforts them, by looſing them from their bonds and ſtraitenings of ſpirit, and allowing them free acceſs unto the throne of grace, ſo as they can pour out their melting hearts in God's boſom with ſome confidence of his favour and good will, 2 Cor. iii. 17.

5*thly*, He comforts them, by hearing and anſwering their prayer, and graciouſly beſtowing upon them their ſpiritual mercies, which they have been many a day ſeeking and wreſtling for, Deut. iv. 7.

6*thly*, He ſometimes gives them the aſſurance of his love and favour, by the witneſſings of his Spirit, concurring with the reaſonings of their ſpirits, whereby they are enabled clearly to diſcern and know the things freely given to them of God; and conclude, that they are in covenant with God, and paſſed from death to life, 1 Cor. ii. 13. Rom. viii. 16.

7*thly*, He comforts them, by letting out upon their ſouls the ſenſible breathings and influences of his Spirit, that are like the dew to the withered graſs; the rain to the dry ground; the ſouth wind to the ſpices; and theſe do enlarge their arts, put an edge upon their faith and love, and make

them cheerful in every duty, Pſalm lxxii. 6. Hoſ. xiv. 5. Cant. iv. 16. Pſalm cxix. 32.

8thly, He ſometimes comforts them, by bringing them into his banqueting-houſe, and ſetting them under the banner of his love. He ſheds abroad his love in their hearts, and gives them peace and joy in believing. He ſcatters their clouds, diſſolves their doubts, removes their fears, and makes them to hear the voice of joy and gladneſs. Conſcience acquits them as ſincere in their faith and love. God ſmiles on them, and kiſſes them with the kiſſes of his mouth, i. e. he enables them to apply the ſweet comforts of his promiſes, which are the refreſhing words of his mouth, ſweeter to them than honey from the honey comb. Thus the Lord ſometimes makes his people joyful in his houſe of prayer, ſatisfies them as with marrow and with fatneſs, gives them the peace that paſſeth underſtanding, and fills them with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory; whereby they are enabled, to delight and rejoice in God, as their covenanted God. He brings them out of the miry clay, ſets their feet upon a rock, eſtabliſhes their goings, and puts a new ſong in their mouth, 'even praiſes to our 'God,' Pſal. xl. 2, 3. Cant. ii. 4. Rom. v. 5. Rom. xv. 13. Pſalm li. 8. Cant. i. 2. Pſalm lxiii. 5.

Q. *How ſhall we know that our manifeſtations and attainments on ſacrament occaſions, are real, and not deluſions?*

A. 1. Theſe manifeſtations which are from God, do commonly carry their own evidence alongſt with them, that convinces the ſoul of their reality.

2dly, They are uſually attained, after much wreſtling, humiliation, and tender walking.

3dly, They are accompanied with great ſelf-loathing and abaſement, and bring humbling diſcoveries of our own emptineſs and vileneſs, Luke v. 8.

4thly, They excite us to high exalting thoughts of Chriſt and free grace, and to approve heartily of Chriſt in all his offices.

5thly, They ſtir up thoſe that have them, to holineſs and tenderneſs of walk, and to have a holy jealouſy over themſelves. But ſo do not the deluſory attainments of hypocrites.

6thly, Where manifeſtations are real and gracious, the ſoul entertains good thoughts of Chriſt, and gives him its teſtimony as lovely and matchleſs even when withdrawn, Cant. x. 6, 10.

Q. *But what ſhall theſe ſerious ſouls do, that cannot lay claim to theſe high attainments and comforts before-mentioned?*

A. 1. Let them bleſs God, that they have theſe things, neceſſary for making out a ſaving intereſt in Chriſt; for ſome of theſe high things afore-mentioned are nor eſſential thereunto.

2*dly*, Let them beware at any time of razing the foundation, upon the account of their wanting theſe ſpecial bleſſings and attainments; ſeeing the promiſes of life and ſalvation are not annexed to theſe, but unto faith followed with holineſs.

3*dly*, We have even ground from Heb. ii. 15. and other texts, to believe that there are ſome heirs of glory, who have a cloudy paſſage, and a rough ſea through their whole voyage to the heavenly Canaan: being all their life time very ſubject to fears and darkneſs: though indeed, I grant it is God's ordinary way to give his people ſome lucid intervals, and calm breezes now and then, for their ſupport and through-bearing.

Q. *May not ſome poor ſouls have real communion with Chriſt, and reap ſpiritual benefit by this ſolemn ordinance, who have not ſuch comforts, and ſenſible manifeſtations from God, as before mentioned?*

A. No doubt, they may; for when Chriſt gives his people a heart-grief and ſorrow for ſin, it is as ſure an evidence of his gracious preſence, and his holding communion with Chriſt, as when their ſouls are affectionately melted into love, praiſe and joy: there is communion with Chriſt, even in a reproof, as is evident in the caſe of Peter, when he denied his maſter; Chriſt gave Peter then a look, and it was a heart-piercing look, whereby he was ſharply rebuked; and yet it was one of the ſweeteſt and kindeſt looks that ever Peter met with ſince his converſion, for it melted his heart, ſet him a mourning, and brought him back again to his Redeemer, whom he had ſo foully deſerted. And there we ſee, was ſweet communion with Chriſt, even in ſharp rebukes; ſo that the nature of communion with Chriſt, is by many very much miſtaken, when they confine it only to ſenſible manifeſtations of God's love, and the ſmiles of his face. For there may be real communion with Chriſt, and great ſoul-advantage reaped by the Lord's ſupper, where theſe are not enjoyed.

As for inſtance, 1. When we find our repentance and grief for ſin increaſed, when we ſee more of ſin's deformity and bitterneſs, abhor it, and reſolve againſt it more as Chriſt's

enemy: and are more afraid of grieving or piercing him by it, than formerly.

2*dly*, When we have an higher eſteem of Chriſt, and his glorious undertaking, and find our hearts better pleaſed with the tenor of the covenant, and contrivance of redemption through Chriſt, than formerly.

3*dly*, When we are ſtrengthened to pray better, cry more fervently to God, and be more anxious for his preſence in duty, than formerly.

4*thly*, When we find ſtronger deſires after heart-holineſs, and for grace to make us capable to ſerve Chriſt, and advance his glory and intereſt in any ſtation.

5*thly*, When our hearts and conſciences are more tender than formerly, ſo that we dare not now ſhift any known duty, nor venture on ſin, or temptations to it as before. The company of the wicked, and all other temptations to ſin, are now unwelcome to us.

6*thly*, When at leaſt, we can ſay, that we have a greater burning of deſires towards Chriſt than before; that we long, thirſt, and are wholly reſtleſs without him, and even would be content to part with all our beſt enjoyments in the world for an intereſt in him: then it is a ſign Chriſt hath been with us in this ordinance, and hath ſhewed us tokens for good, for which we have cauſe to be thankful to him.

Q. *What ſhall we ſay of theſe, who thought they had ſomething of the ſhining of God's face upon their ſoul, when they were at the table; but now they are gone, and their ſky is again overcaſt with clouds: they apprehended their hearts were melted: and their affections thawed, and their ſouls were in a good frame, but now they are dead again, as before?*

A. 1. Let ſuch examine their attainments, whether they be the temporary flaſhes, or ſeeming goodneſs of hypocrites, by the marks and differences, which I have laid down before, for that end.

2*dly*, Let them not conclude, that all they taſted or felt at the Lord's table, was deluſion; becauſe their caſe is ſo ſoon altered; for it is no new thing for the people of God to complain of a ſudden change in their proſperous condition, and to be troubled with heart-deadneſs and drouſineſs, and with Chriſt's withdrawing ſoon on the back of ſweet communion with him; Pſalm. xxx. 6, 7. Cant. ii. 16, 17. compared

with Cant. iii. 1. Matth. xxvi. 26, 30, 35. compared with Chap. v. 40, 43, 45.

3dly, They ought to reflect upon their own carriage under Chriſt's ſmiles, and ſee what ground they have given him to withdraw. It may be, 1. They were not thankful, when they had his preſence. Or, 2dly, perhaps they were vain or proud of it. Or, 3dly, They were not watchful againſt their ſpiritual enemies. Or, 4thly, They truſted too much to themſelves, and did not depend upon Chriſt, for preſerving their gracious frame of heart.

Q. *What courſe ought theſe ſerious ſouls to take, who have ſo ſoon loſt their gracious frame and attainments?*

A. 1 Let them beware of queſtioning all the former proofs of God's favour, or blaming Chriſt now for unkindneſs, in tarrying ſo ſhort while with them; but let them blame their own unwatchful and untender carriage, while he was pleaſed to viſit them with his preſence.

2dly, Let them go in ſecret, and be deeply humbled under a ſenſe of their miſcarriage and miſmanagement, and look to the blood of ſprinkling for pardon.

3dly, Let them try to cloſe afreſh with Chriſt on the goſpel-offers, and ſeal the covenant of new; and if they ſubſcribed it before with a trembling hand, and ſo indiſtinctly and darkly, that they cannot read their name; let them now ſubſcribe over again, and ſtudy to do it in more diſtinct and legible characters.

Q. *What is incumbent upon thoſe, who are ſtill ſenſible of God's gracious preſence, and bountiful dealing towards them, at the ſacrament?*

A. 1. They ſhould wonder, that he condeſcends ſo far to ſuch vile and unworthy creatures, 2 Sam. vii. 18.

2dly, They ſhould be thankful, and rejoice in him; let the children of Zion be joyful in their king, Pſalm cxlix 4.

3dly, Let them entertain their Redeemer kindly, and hold him in the galleries by a holy importunity, and carefully guard againſt every thing that may ſtir him up, or awake him, till he pleaſe, Cant. ii. 7.

4thly, They ought to ſet up their pillar of remembrance, record what they have ſeen and met with at this ordinance; take all about them to witneſs that it is Chriſt, and reſolve to keep it always on record, and make uſe of it againſt the time,

when curſed unbelief, or a challenging devil will be ready to ſay, 'Where is thy God?' Pſalm xliii. 3, 4, 6.

5thly, They ought to walk very tenderly and watchfully, fearing, leſt they ſhould loſe what they have got; like a traveller that hath much money or many jewels about him, who is apt to ſuſpect every one he meets with for a thief. We have many envious enemies, who have a narrow eye upon us at this market of grace, and ſeek to rob us of the precious treaſure we get there, Luke xxii. 31.

6thly, They ought to pity and pray for others that have not won their length, and by prayer ſend portions to theſe, for whom nothing is provided.

7thly, Let them commit their hearts and frames to Chriſt's keeping, that he may preſerve any good thing to them they have got, and be ſurety for them and it, and make it forthcoming to them againſt the time of need, 1 Chron. xxix. 18. Pſalm cxix. 122. 1 Tim. i. 12.

8thly, Let them carfully notice the firſt ſtep or leaſt degree of God's withdrawing from them, and endeavour to hold him, and ſtop his way by throwing themſelves at his feet, and humbly beſeeching him to ſtay with them, notwithſtanding of many grounds of provocation.

Q. *But what ſhall theſe poor believers do, who inſtead of praiſing God for his bountiful dealing at this ordinance, are put to ſigh and mourn under darkneſs and deſertion?*

A. 1. They ſhould conſider that this caſe is not unuſual for the beſt of ſaints; Job, David, Aſaph, Heman, nay, Chriſt himſelf, have complained of deſertion.

2dly, They ſhould make no harſh conſtructions of God's dealing with them, but leave their complaints upon themſelves, and juſtify God in all he doth.

3dly, They ſhould be deeply humbled under the loſs of God's gracious preſence, be grieved for theſe things that have ſinned him away, ſit as a widow in his abſence, and refuſe all other comforters till he return, Lam. i. 16.

4thly, They ſhould be ſearching diligently for the Achan in the camp, the ſin for which God is contending with them; Pſalm lxxvii. 6. Job. x. 2.

5thly, They ſhould learn to live by faith, and truſt in a withdrawing God; believe him, think and ſpeak well of him, when he frowns, as well as when he ſmiles, Job xiii. 15.

Q. *Is not deſertion, or the withdrawing of God's preſence from a poor ſoul, a very ſad and melancholy caſe?*

A. Certainly it is: for, 1. The ſoul under deſertion, is deprived of the light of God's countenance, which is the choiceſt bleſſing in the world, Pſalm iv. 6.

2*dly*, The conſequents of God's withdrawings are very heavy and grievous to believers; becauſe ordinarily there follows upon it theſe evils,

Firſt, Great darkneſs and confuſion upon the ſpirit, Lam. iii. 2.

2*dly*, Great hardneſs and impenitency upon the heart, Iſa. lxiii. 17.

3*dly*, Much deadneſs and ſtupidity upon the affections.

4*thly*, Loſs of ſpiritual appetite and deſires.

5*thly*, Unſpiritedneſs and diſability for duty, Pſalm xl. 12. Pſalm lxxxviii. 4.

6*thly*, A general barrenneſs upon the ſoul, and witheredneſs of the graces, John xvi. 6.

7*thly*, Liableneſs to all ſorts of dangers and enemies, Num. xiv. 9.

8*thly*, Anxiety of mind, for former unkindneſs and unthankfulneſs to God, Pſalm lxxvii. 3.

9*thly*, Unwelcome thoughts of death and judgment.

10*thly*, A revived ſenſe of wrath, and of the law's curſes and threatenings.

11*thly*, Melancholy appehenſions of God's judgments to purſue them, while they are in time.

12*thly*, Fears of utter rejection; and eternal baniſhment from God's preſence, Pſalm lxxvii. 9, 10. Pſalm cxix. 8.

Q. *What are the uſual cauſes of God's withdrawing from his people?*

A. 1. Their ſcandalous outbreakings, Iſa. i. 13, 14.

2*dly*, Their wearying of duty, Iſa. xliii. 22.

3*dly*, Their not entertaining Chriſt's calls, and his Spirit's motions, Cant. v. 2, 3, 6.

4*thly*, Their earthly-mindedneſs, and preferring of time's thing's to precious Chriſt, Iſa. lvii. 17. Matth. viii. 28.

5*thly*, Their ſloth and formality in duty, Iſa. lxiv. 7.

6*thly*, Their want of a due ſenſe of their own ſins, and the ſins of the land where they live, Hoſ. v. 15.

7*thly*, Their making a Saviour of their duties, and putting eſe in Chriſt's room.

8*thly*, Miſcarriages under, or after ſignal enjoyments and manifeſtations, 1 Kings xi. 9.

9*thly*, Their ſins under, or after great afflictions, Iſaiah lvii. 17.

Q. *What ſhall we do to recover God's gracious preſence again, when we have loſt it?*

A. 1. Let us be ſenſible that we have ſinned him away.

2*dly*, Let us humbly enquire into the cauſe of his departure.

3*dly*, Let us be reſtleſs and uneaſy in our minds till he return.

4*thly*, Let us conſcientiouſly attend all ordinances, and uſe all means for recovering God's preſence.

5*thly*, Let us ſtill be lamenting after the Lord, and bewailing the loſs we ſuſtain for want of him.

6*thly*, Let us both be mourning for, and ſtriving to mortify theſe ſins and idols, that have taken our Lord away from us.

7*thly*, Let us ſtill continue fervent in prayer, and wreſtle with God for his gracious return; and let us fill our mouths with arguments to plead with him for it, Pſalm xxv. 16, 17. Job xxiii. 3, 4.

Q. *What are theſe proper arguments, which we are to plead in prayer, for the return of God's gracious preſence?*

A. 1. We ought to plead the low and helpleſs caſe we are in without it, Pſalm lxxix. 8.

2*dly*, We ſhould plead the extreme need we ſtand in of it.

3*dly*, Plead the greatneſs and tenderneſs of God's mercy, and Chriſt's bowels of compaſſion, Matth. xv. 22.

4*thly*, Plead how eaſy it is for him to anſwer all our complaints, and redreſs all our grievances, Pſalm lxxx. 1.

5*thly*, Plead the freeneſs of his grace.

6*thly*, The greatneſs of his power.

7*thly*, The glory of his name, Pſalm lxxix. 8.

8*thly*, Let us plead former experiences of his kindneſs, Pſalm lxxxvi. 3, 5, 13.

Laſtly, Let us much plead our covenant-relation to God, and our intereſt in him: the church and people of God do often make uſe of this argument with God, 'We 'are thine, a people that belong to thee,' Iſa. lxiii. 19. Pſalm cxix. 94. Pſalm lxxix. 8. And this argument hath often prevailed with God to return to his people, Iſa. lxiii. 8. Exod. xxxii. 11, 12, 13, 14.

Q. *But what ſhall theſe do, who cannot plead this argument, in regard, they fear they are not in covenant with God, and ſo cannot ſay to him,* We are thine?

A. 1. Though believers under deſertion are often tempted to renounce and quit claim to any covenant-relation to God; yet we ſhould not hearken to that temptation, nor be willing to let go the covenant we have taken hold of. But ſeeing we have fled to the horns of the altar for ſafety, we ſhould abide by them; and even when by temptations, we are beat off from one horn, we ſhould ſtrive to hold faſt by another. And therefore when we cannot ſay to God, 'We are thine' by his acceptance; yet we ſhould ſay, 'We are thine' by our own reſignation. As we have formerly given up ourſelves to God, ſo we reſolve to abide by that deed: we will not be the devil's nor the world's, but we will be the Lord's. And when we are thus helped reſolutely to caſt ourſelves upon him, our ſouls may revive, and faith gather ſtrength in prayer; for to be ſure, God is more ready to covenant with us, than we with him; and more willing to be ours, than we are to be his.

2*dly*, Let us plead a title to God by creation, when we cannot do it by redemption; ſo doth the church under deſertion, Iſa. lxiv. 7, 8, 9. 'O Lord, thou art our Father, we 'are the clay, and thou our potter, and we are all the work 'of thine hand. Be not worth very ſore, &c.' If we can do no more, let us thus plead an intereſt in him by creation, and wait his leiſure; for if we duly make uſe of this one talent, it will increaſe.

Q. *What ſhall be ſaid to theſe diſconſolate ſouls, who are complaining, that it is not with them now, as in the days of old, and in months paſt, when the candle of the Lord ſhined on their heads: once they went to communions with great ſatisfaction, and returned with the high praiſes of God in their mouths: but now God hath altered the courſe of his dealing with them; he hides his face, and ſacrament-days are melancholy occaſions to them. They call to mind former experiences, but alas, they find that doth but increaſe their trouble,* Pſalm lxxvii. 3.

A. 1. Let all ſuch conſider, that God takes different ways of dealing with his people. He uſeth to treat young beginners otherwiſe than thoſe who have made ſome progreſs in religion: he knows young beginners are raw and tender, and unable to bide a ſtorm; and therefore it is ſaid, 'He carries

'the lambs in his boſom.' We uſe to hire children to learn their leſſon, when they go firſt to ſchool; but afterwards we correct them, and make them learn with a frown.

2*dly*, We ought to remember, that Chriſt will have his people to live and walk by faith, and not by ſenſe, to follow him in dark nights, and through rough paths, and even when he ſeems to flee from them. It would be no trial to our faith and love, to follow Chriſt in the roughest ways, had we ſtill a view of the crown, and of Chriſt's ſmiling face; but Chriſt will have his diſciples taught to follow him, without ſenſible encouragements. We ſee theſe that run a race, get a ſight of the ſilver cup or prize, firſt when they ſet forth; but perhaps never ſee it again till they get it in their hand, and yet they run on; ſo a traveller may ſee the city he is going to, when he is ſeveral miles off, and yet it may be out of his ſight when he is within half a mile of it; but he believes it is not far off, and therefore ſtill goes on.

3*dly*, Let ſuch diſconſolate ſouls ſtrive to keep up a warm love to Chriſt, and to commend him highly, even in his abſence, as did the ſpouſe, Cant. v. 6. There we ſee, ſhe had ſought Chriſt, but could not find him; ſhe called him, but he gave no anſwer; and ſhe is rudely handled in his abſence by the watchmen, and upbraided by the daughters of Jeruſalem: yet notwithſtanding of all theſe diſcouragements, ſhe breaks out in the moſt lofty commendation of her beloved, and his matchleſs excellencies, verſe 10. to the cloſe; and concludes all with this, 'He is altogether lovely.'

4*thly*, However melancholy the preſent caſe of ſuch may be, yet they ſhould ſtudy to ſing praiſes to God, in a thankful remembrance of the kindneſs he hath ſhewed to them in former times. It is a provoking carriage in many believers, that when any new cloud comes, or doubt ariſes, they prove ſo froward and unthankful to Chriſt, as if he had never done any thing for them at all. It would certainly be both juſt and generous in believers to ſing praiſes to their beloved, under their darkeſt clouds.

Q. *But how ſhall they ſing, who think they have cauſe to weep with Jeruſalem*, Lam. i. 16, For theſe things I weep, mine eyes run down with water, for the comforter that ſhould relieve my ſoul is far from me?

A. 1. They ſhould even mix their weeping with ſinging, for tears and praiſes are not inconſiſtent; ſometimes it rains

while the ſun ſhines. Believers are called 'to praiſe God 'at all times, and in every thing to give thanks, and to re'joice evermore.' We ſee Paul and Silas ſang praiſes to God in a dark priſon at midnight, when their backs were torn with ſcourges, and their feet faſt with ſtocks, Acts xvi. 25. Hence it is, that believers are called *ſinging-birds*, Cant. ii. 12. They ſhould ſing in all the ſeaſons and months of the year, even in winter, and in the dead month of affliction and deſertion. When it is winter and foul weather they ſhould ſing in remembrance of the fair blinks they have had, and in expectation of the ſummer-ſun at the return of the year; and ſo rejoice in hope of better times.

2dly, This courſe may prove very ſucceſsful to the removing of our grievances, and altering of our frames. For thus, ſome exerciſed ſouls have ſung away their heart-plagues and ill-frames. By praiſing, they have conquered their unbelief, diſtruſt, and unworthy thoughts of Chriſt, as Jehoſhaphat did the Ammonites, by ſending ſingers before the army into the field, when he was in great diſtreſs, 2 Chron. xx. 21, 22. So did David in his dejected and melancholy condition, Pſalm xlii. 6, 8, 9, 11. 'O my God, my ſoul is caſt down 'within me, therefore will I remember thee from the land of 'Jordan, and of the Hermonites, from the hill Mizar: yet 'the Lord will command his loving kindneſs in the day-time, 'and in the night his ſong ſhall be with me, and my prayer 'unto the God of my life.—I will ſay unto God, my rock, 'Why haſt thou forgotten me? Why go I mourning becauſe 'of the oppreſſion of the enemy? Why art thou caſt down, 'O my ſoul? And why art thou diſquieted within me? hope 'thou in God, for I ſhall yet praiſe him, who is the help of 'my countenance, and my God.' Where we may obſerve, how David ſings away his diſcouragement and dejection, partly by reflecting and looking back on what God had done for him before; and partly by expecting and believing what God would yet do for him. Likewiſe we ſee the church in the Lamentations; for as low as ſhe was in diſtreſs, under which ſhe was mourning and weeping; yet ſhe hopes and praiſes in the midſt of all, Lam. iii. 17, 18, 24, 25, 31, 32.

Q. *But what ſhall theſe do, whoſe caſe is ſo dark, and hopes ſo ſunk, that look they back or forward, they can ſee no light? How ſhall they ſing or praiſe?*

A. Though they had no other matter of praiſe, they

ſhould try to ſing of Chriſt's wonderful free love, his glorious undertaking, and amazing condeſcenſion, in leaving his throne in heaven, to dwell with worms on earth, and bear their ſins upon the curſed tree. Is there not here ſufficient, nay, endleſs matter of praiſe, both for angels and men?

Q. *How ſhall theſe praiſe, who think they have no intereſt in that love-undertaking?*

A. 1. How many things do we praiſe that we have no intereſt in, and are nothing the better of. We praiſe the ſtrength of Samſon, the wiſdom of Solomon and the courage of Alexander, that we are not intereſted in.

2*dly*, The angels admire and praiſe Chriſt's glorious undertaking for loſt men, though he took not upon him the nature of angels, nor died for them; and much more ought we, whoſe nature he aſſumed, and to whom he ſo freely offers the benefits of his death, Rev. v. 11, 12.

3*dly*, It is ſurely our own fault, if we have not an intereſt in Chriſt's undertaking, ſeeing we are ſo preſſingly invited to come and ſhare of it; for if we will but come and accept of Chriſt's love, and the benefits of his death, then all is ours. And why then ſhould we not willingly accept of the goſpel-offer, and claim an intereſt in all that Chriſt hath done for ſinners?

4*thly*, Let us mint to look to Chriſt, love him, and praiſe him as we can; and he will cauſe our ſky to break, and give us more ground of praiſe. For we are ſure he never ſent one to hell, that loved and praiſed him with his heart.

Q. *But what ſhall theſe dejected ſouls do, who can ſay they have prayed, they have praiſed, gone to many communions attended all ordinances, and all duties, and eſſayed all means they can think of; but they miſs God in them all, ſtill he hides his face; and ſo they are almoſt hopeleſs, and fear matters will never mend with them?*

A. 1. We have Job that eminent ſaint, making that very ſame complaint Job xxiii. 8, 9. 'Behold, I go forward, but 'I cannot perceive him: on the left hand where he doth work, 'but I cannot behold him: he hideth himſelf on the right 'hand that I cannot ſee him.' Where we ſee, he tried all arts, eſſayed all means, and uſed all diligence to find God's gracious preſence, and ſtill he is diſappointed. And good Hezekiah, in his diſtreſs, ſays, he mourned as a dove, 'and

'his eyes failed with looking upward,' Iſa. xxxviii. 14. So that we ſee ſuch a complaint is no ſingular caſe.

2*dly*, We ſhould never ſuccumb in the day of adverſity, whatever be our trial, but always make known our caſe to God by prayer, and never faint, Prov. xxiv. 10. Luke xviii. 1. As this is our commanded duty, ſo it is the practice of the ſaints in the greateſt ſtraits; they ſtill lye at the throne of grace, and never give over duty, Pſalm cxix. 81, 82, 83. Yea, Jonah, when his caſe ſeemed moſt hopeleſs, he being in the belly of a whale, and in the bottom of the ocean, yet he perſiſts in duty, Jonah ii. 6. 'When my ſoul fainted within 'me, I remembered the Lord, and my prayer came in unto 'thee.'

3*dly*, As we ſhould perſiſt in ſeeking Chriſt, ſo we ſhould continue to do it ſorrowing and weeping, as Mary did at the ſepulchre; yea, her ſorrow for her loſs was ſo great, that two angels could not dry up her tears, nor comfort her heart without Chriſt,

4*thly*, Let us ſee that our ſorrow be of the right ſtamp: that it be, 1. Not only for our loſs, but for our ſins that are the cauſe thereof; alas, it is our ſins that hath grieved his Spirit.

2*dly*, That it be not ſo much for the loſs of the comfort and ſweetneſs we have felt in communion with God, as for the loſs of God himſelf, and his preſence, which is valuable.

3*dly*, That it be not ſo much for the diſadvantage we ourſelves ſuſtain, as that we are leſs capable to ſerve God, having no life for duty, no ſtrength to love or praiſe him, as formerly.

4*thly*, In the midſt of our deepeſt ſorows for God's abſence, let us not omit to take notice of God's goodneſs, in any thing that is favourable in our caſe, and bleſs God for it: as for inſtance, 1. That he gives us a ſenſe of our condition, and that we are not paſt all feeling, as many are.

2*dly*, That we are living, and have yet time to ſearch, mourn, pray, and uſe means for recovering his preſence.

3*dly*, That we are not in a hopeleſs, deſpairing condition, like Spira, or the damned in hell; for what better are we than they?

4*thly*, When our reaſon tires and ſuccumbs, then faith ſhould take place, and we ſhould even hope againſt hope, according to Rom. iv. 18. When ordinary means do not ſucceed, we ſhould even look to God, that can work without means,

and beyond them; and can act miraculously. Let us obſerve Jonah's behaviour in the whale's belly, Jonah ii. 3, 4. 'Thou 'haſt caſt me into the deep, in the midſt of the ſeas, and the 'floods compaſſed me about, all thy billows and thy waves 'paſſed over me. Then I ſaid, I am caſt out of thy ſight; 'yet I will look again toward thy holy temple.' Jonah's caſe looked to be ſingular, he thought God had quite forſaken him, and would never return again: for he had no example before him of any in his caſe, or of any that was delivered out of a fiſh's belly. There was no way of eſcape open to him, but by a miracle; and what ground had he to expect that a miracle of mercy ſhould be wrought for him, who was now made a monument of juſtice. His own conſcience, no doubt, would flee in his face, and tell him, that he had wickedly fled from the preſence of the Lord, and therefore God might juſtly caſt him out of his preſence; that he had procured all this ſad diſtreſs to himſelf, and ſo had little ground to expect deliverance. And yet we ſee how wonderfully his faith overcame his fear and deſpondency, verſe 4. 'yet I will 'look again toward thy holy temple.' Though his guilt made him aſhamed to ſay he would dwell in God's houſe either on earth, or in heaven; yet he ſays, I will at leaſt look toward it: though thou ſhouldſt caſt me never ſo far away from thee, 'Yet I will look again to thee:' yea, though thou ſhouldſt caſt me down as low as hell, yet I will look up from it to thee again; ſtill my heart will hanker after thee, and I will look for pity at thy hand.

5*thly*, Let us plead the mercy of God's nature, and the faithfulneſs of his word, and ſtay our fainting ſouls on theſe props; and when our darkneſs is great, let us ſend forth hope, that good meſſenger, to ſee what it can ſpy, and what good news it can bring in from the mercy and faithfulneſs of God, according to Pſalm xliii. 5. Pſalm cxix. 81. Pſalm ciii. 9. Iſa. lvii. 16.

6*thly*, It becomes us, under hidings and diſappointments, at ſuch a ſolemn occaſion, humbly to ſubmit to divine Sovereignty (for God knows what is beſt for us) and quietly to hold his time and leiſure; and ſtill to hope for a viſit from him in due time: it was a noble ſaying of one, in ſuch a caſe, "Though he came not to dine with me, yet he'll come and "ſup, therefore I will wait on." The Lord takes a liberty with his people while here, becauſe he has a whole eternity to

manifeſt himſelf to them; the time is near, when theſe who groan under his abſence, 'ſhall be ever with the Lord', 1 Theſſ. iv. 17. O deſerted believers, take comfort; for what you come ſhort of obtaining on earth, will be abundantly made up to you in heaven; whatever doors, walls or lattices, are now betwixt you and Chriſt, hereafter there ſhall be none. You may ſay, how long he will hide, I cannot poſitively determine, but this I am ſure of, he can withdraw himſelf no longer from a poor believer, than he is in this world. Rejoice in this, you ſhall drop all your complaints, fears and jealouſies at heaven's gates, and never take them up again. And, in the mean time, let preſent hidings and diſappointments have the ſame effect upon you, they had on the ſpouſe, Cant. iii. 3. ſhe turns ſick of love to Chriſt, riſes from her ſloth, and goes through all the ſtreets and ways of the city, ſeeking him whom her ſoul loved.

Q. *But what ſhall be ſaid to thoſe diſtreſſed ſouls, who apprehend that none of theſe counſels and comforts that belong to God's children under deſertion, are applicable to them, becauſe they fear they are totally and finally forſaken?*

A. 1. Let ſuch remember what counſel they have ſometimes given, to ſupport others, in the like caſe, and ſtudy now to take it to themſelves; leſt it be applicable to them, what Eliphaz ſaid to Job, 'Thy words have upholden him that 'was falling, and thou haſt ſtrengthened the feeble knees. 'but now it is come upon thee, and thou fainteſt; it toucheth thee, and thou art troubled,' Job iv. 4, 5. It is indeed much eaſier to give advice, than to take it: people in health will adviſe ſick folk to take this and the other thing; and yet when the caſe comes to be their own, they are at a ſtand what to do.

2dly, Let ſuch ſeriouſly conſider, whether indeed they bear the characters of a total deſertion, yea, or not; indeed, if their hearts be willing to quit God, give up all claim to him, be ſatisfied with the world, and indifferent whether he return again or no, it is a bad ſign: but let them be ingenious; is there not ſtill ſome hankering deſire in their ſouls towards God? Is there not ſomething in their hearts, that ſays, let him do with me as he pleaſes? I am reſolved to lye all my days at Chriſt's feet, and never go to another door for mercy; though he ſhould never ſmile on me; yet I'll ſtill be uneaſy and reſtleſs without his favour; I'll wait for him, cleave to

him, and mourn after him. Whatever the devil or my own heart ſuggeſt, I will not believe any ill report of Chriſt. I will not hear an ill tale of that lovely one, nor go from his door with any harſh thoughts of him. And though their caſe be very dark and hopeleſs like, yet let me aſk them, if they would be willing to quit any little hope they have of Chriſt, for all the world's pleaſures, or flattering offers that ſin and Satan can make them? Nay, is there not ſomething in their conſciences; that ſtill ſtands up for God againſt ſin, ſaying, though I ſhould die in darkneſs, yet I will never hearken to ſin or Satan, I'll never quit prayer, I'll never hate Chriſt or holineſs, I'll never yield to temptations, nor join with the wicked, who wallow in ſin's puddle, and mock at religion. Do they not ſee many about them, that for as ill as their caſe is, yet they would not exchange caſes with them, for all the riches and honours in the land? Then ſurely they are not totally nor finally forſaken. For what is it but the Spirit of God, that keeps them waking and reſtleſs without Chriſt, when others are ſleeping in ſin, and have no trouble for want of him? What is it, but his grace, that keeps them ſtill waiting on God in the way of duty, and in the uſe of all means? And though they come little ſpeed, yet they dare not ſlight ordinances, nor neglect prayer as many do, but ſtill would be at caſting themſelves in Chriſt and his Spirit's way, and keep as near him as poſſible they can. And dare never think of ſaying to God, with the wicked, Job xxi. 14. 'Depart from 'us, we deſire not the knowledge of thy ways.' Surely this is owing to Chriſt's upholding grace, and not to ourſelves: for were we wholly left by him, we would run as far from God and his preſence, as ever we could, and ſhun all ſort of converſe with him. Let us then receive and take notice of the leaſt crumb of Chriſt's goodneſs with thankfulneſs, and cordially bleſs him for it, for that is the way to get more, Pſalm lxvii. 5, 6. Luke xvii. 15.

Of the converſation of COMMUNICANTS, after they have been at the Lord's table.

Queſt. *WHAT is that converſation that communicants ought to have after the ſacrament?*

A. It muſt be a converſation that is rightly ordered, and ſuitable to the obligations we are laid under by this ordinance: particularly, it muſt be in ſome meaſure ſuitable to theſe things. 1. The rule of God's word. 2. The pattern of Chriſt's life. 3. The principles of our profeſſion. 4. The vows we have made. 5. The ſights we have ſeen. 6. The favours we have received. 7. The promiſes that are ſealed to us in this ordinance. Laſtly, the offices and relations, which Chriſt hath undertaken, and ſtands in to his people.

Q. *When is our converſation ſuitable to the rule of God's word?*

A. 1. When we conſcientiouſly ſtudy to know God's mind revealed in his will.

2*dly*, When we put a high value on God's word, and eſteem all its precepts to be juſt and right.

3*dly*, When we ſincerely aim at an univerſal conformity thereto, both in heart and in life, without neglecting any known duty.

4*thly*, When we carefully notice all our wanderings and aberrations from this rule, mourn for them, reform from them, and alſo hate and avoid every thing contrary to this holy rule, Iſa. viii. 20. Pſalm cxix. 128.

Q. *When is our converſation ſuited to the pattern of Chriſt's life?*

A. When we ſtudy to follow his ſteps when he lived on earth, and imitate him in all his imitable perfections; particularly in theſe,

Firſt, His meekneſs and lowlineſs.

2*dly*, His mortification and deadneſs to the world, and its enjoyments.

3*dly*, His heavenlineſs and ſpirituality in diſcourſe.

4*thly*, His frequency and fervency in prayer.

5*thly*, His love to holineſs.

6*thly*, His zealous concern for the purity of God's worſhip and ordinances.

7*thly*, His readineſs to do good to others.

8*thly*, His forgiving and praying for enemies.

9*thly*, His obedience to parents.

10*thly*, His peaceful and quiet deportment.

11*thly*, His temperance in diet.

12*thly*, His contentment in a mean condition.

13*thly*, His thankfulneſs for mercies.

14*thly*, His willingneſs to die.

Q. *When is our converſation ſuited to the principles of our profeſſion?*

A. When we diſtinctly know them, firmly believe them, openly profeſs them, ſtedfaſtly adhere to them, and have our practice correſponding to our profeſſion. Particularly, when we live and walk as theſe who fixedly believe.

Firſt, That God is infinitely holy and juſt.

2*dly*, That God is the fountain and giver of all good.

3*dly*, That all things in the world are vanity, and infinitely below God.

4*thly*, That ſin is the greateſt evil in the world, and cannot be expiated without an infinite ſatisfaction.

5*thly*, That Jeſus Chriſt is the only Saviour of ſinners, and infinitely precious.

6*thly*, That Chriſtleſs ſouls are in a loſt ſtate, under the power of ſin and Satan.

7*thly*, That a holy God hath tied ſin and ſorrow together.

8*thly*, That repentance is abſolutely neceſſary to the pardon of ſin.

9*thly*, That faith in Jeſus Chriſt is the only way to reconciliation with God, and the obtaining of any mercy from him.

10*thly*, That without regeneration we cannot be admitted to communion with God, nor ſee the kingdom of heaven.

11*thly*, That holineſs and happineſs are inſeparably connected together.

12*thly*, That God is a Spirit, and can never be pleaſed with bodily ſervice, but muſt needs have the heart in every duty.

13*thly*, That we have no good thing in ourſelves, grace muſt work all in us, and without Chriſt we can do nothing. Now if our practice be ſuitable to theſe principles, we muſt be numbered among theſe that glorify God, and order their converſation aright, Pſalm l. ult. But if our walk be contrary thereto, we will be ranked among theſe that 'profeſs that 'they know God, but in works they deny him,' Tit i. ult.

Q. *When is our converſation anſwerable to our ſacramental vows?*

A. 1. When we keep up a lively ſenſe of our vows and engagements upon our ſpirits, Pſalm liv. 12.

2*dly*, When we diſtruſt our own ſtrength, for keeping an performing our vows, flee to God in Chriſt for ſtrength, an

back our vows with earneſt prayers, Pſalm cxix. 8, 57, 58.

3*dly*, When we careſully ſtudy in Chriſt's ſtrength to perform our vows, by a conſtant watchfulneſs againſt all ſin, and a conſtant diligence in all duty, Job xxxi. 1. Pſalm cxix. 106.

4*thly*, When we make theſe perſons witneſſes to the performance of our vows, whom we made witneſſes to the making of them; that is, when we behave ourſelves ſo circumſpectly and chriſtianly in all theſe parts of our converſation, which are viſible to the world, that the whole congregation may obſerve a change to the better, and take notice of us, 'That we have been with Jeſus,' Pſalm cxvi. 14. Acts iv. 13.

5*thly*, When we ſtand upon our guard againſt all theſe temptations that may induce us to break our vows; ſuch as evil company, and immoderate love to the world; for by theſe both Peter and Demas were tempted to break their vows.

6*thly*, When we improve our vows, in time of temptation, for quenching the fiery darts of the tempter, and reſiſting all his ſolicitations, ſaying, 'Thy vows are upon me, O God. 'And how can I do this wickedneſs, and ſin againſt God,' Pſalm lvi. 12. Gen. xxxix. 9.

7*thly*, When we remember our vows, ſo as to rouſe and quicken us to duty, when we begin to grow backward to it, or ſlothful in performing of it, Pſalm cxix. 106.

Q. *When is our converſation ſuited to the ſight which we behold in the ſacrament?*

A. When we are ſo affected with the ſufferings of Chriſt, and the dreadfulneſs of God's wrath, and ſeverity of his juſtice againſt ſin here repreſented; as to keep up conſtant impreſſions of the evil of ſin, and to hate it, and avoid it with all carefulneſs, 2 Cor. vii. 11.

2*dly*, When we are ſo affected with the greatneſs of Chriſt's love to us here diſplayed, as to be thereby conſtrained to love him again, to admire and praiſe him; ſtudy likeneſs to him; converſe much with him; avoid what he hates and forbids; and practiſe what he loves and commands, 2 Cor. v. 14, 15.

3*dly*, When we ſo believe the preciouſneſs of our ſouls, that Chriſt gave his life a ranſom for; and the worth of heaven, that Chriſt ſhed his blood to purchaſe; as to be willing to quit with all ſinful pleaſures to gain theſe; and make it the

uptaking buſineſs of our lives, to win our ſouls and eternal glory, Matth. xvi. 26. 2 Cor. iv. 18.

Q. *When is our converſation ſuited to the favours which we receive at the ſacrament?*

A. 1. When we keep up grateful impreſſions, and a high ſenſe of redeeming love upon our ſpirits.

2*dly*, When we labour to preſerve theſe comforts which we have taſted at the Lord's table, and to keep theſe evidences unclouded, which we have got there cleared up, by our tender and humble walking with God, 2 John 8.

3*dly*, When we ſet ourſelves with all holy care and watchfulneſs, to guard againſt the ſnares of Satan, the charms of ſin, and every thing that is diſpleaſing to Chriſt, who loved us, and hath done ſo much for us, Ezra ix. 13, 14. Pſalm lxxxv. 8.

4*thly*, When from a principle of gratitude, we ſet ourſelves not only to love and praiſe God for what he hath done for us, but alſo to walk before him in the land of the living, in a holy and examplary converſation: to comply with his will, conſult his honour, and lay out ourſelves with zeal and cheerfulneſs in his ſervice; thinking nothing too much to do, too hard to ſuffer, or too dear to part with, for him that hath done and ſuffered, and parted with ſo much for us, Pſalm cxvi. 8, 9. 2 Cor. v. 14, 15.

Q. *When is our converſation ſuited to the great things promiſed and ſealed to us in the ſacrament?*

A. 1. When we firmly believe them, and rely on God's faithfulneſs for the accompliſhment of them.

2*dly*, When we are thankful and praiſe God for making ſuch great and precious promiſes to us, 2 Sam. vii. 18, 19.

3*dly*, When we undervalue this preſent world, with all its pomp, treaſures and pleaſures, and look for better and greater things to come, Heb. ii. 13, 14. 1 Pet. i. 13.

4*thly*, When we are patient under trials and afflictions, expecting a happy change of our circumſtances ſooner or later, Mic. vii. 9. Pſalm xlii. 5.

5*thly*, When we wait quietly for the accompliſhment of God's promiſes, even when he ſeems to ſtay long, believing, that at laſt he will make abundant recompenſe for his ſtay, Mic. vii. 7. Lam. iii. 25, 26.

6*thly*, When we live as heirs of the promiſes, and behave ourſelves as candidates for heaven, reſiſting temptations, co

quering luſts, contemning the world, overcoming the fears of death, and love of life, and ſtudying to be holy in all manner of converſation, Heb. xi. 9, 10. 1 Pet. ii. 2. 2 Pet. iii. 11, 12.

Q. *When is our converſation ſuited to the offices and relations, which Chriſt hath undertaken, and ſtands in to his covenanted people?*

A. When we love and honour him in theſe offices and relations, and ſtudy to expreſs our love and reſpect in our carriage and behaviour towards him. As for inſtance, 1. Is Chriſt our Prophet to inſtruct us? Then let us carefully hearken to him, and learn theſe leſſons which he teaches us; particularly to contemn the world, deny ourſelves, and depart from all iniquity; which he tells us, is the trueſt wiſdom, Job xxviii. 28.

2*dly*, Is Chriſt our prieſt, that appeaſes offended juſtice for our ſins, by his precious blood? Then let us hate ſin, and fear to offend that holy and dreadful God, whoſe juſtice is ſo inexorable, that he would not paſs ſin without ſuch a ſatisfaction.

3*dly*, Is Chriſt our King to govern us? Then let us behave as loyal ſubjects to him, obey his laws, oppoſe his enemies, and give no harbour or entertainment to theſe traitors that ſeek to dethrone him, or pull the crown off his head.

4*thly*, Is Chriſt our phyſician, to heal our diſeaſes? Then let us obey his preſcriptions, apply the healing plaiſter of his blood to our wounds, and beware of cutting or mangling ourſelves of new by ſin.

5*thly*, Is Chriſt our ſurety, to pay our debts? Then let us acquaint him fully with the ſtate of our ſoul affairs, and beware of running ourſelves into new arrears; for this were to turn the grace of God into wantonneſs.

6*thly*, Is Chriſt our cleanſer, that waſhes us in the fountain of his blood? Then let us ſtudy, to keep our garments clean, and beware of going again into the puddle of ſin.

7*thly*, Is Chriſt our ſhepherd, that leads and feeds us in green paſtures? Then let us follow him, and beware of ſtraying from him, or going into the devil's fields to feed on ſwiniſh huſks.

8*thly*, Is Chriſt our friend and agent in heaven, to appear in our name, and take care of our affairs? Then let us be con-

cerned for his intereſt here on earth, and beware of requiting his kindneſs with unthankfulneſs.

9*thly* Is Chriſt our huſband, to whom we have given ourſelves in a marriage covenant, and ſworn to be faithful? Then let us put away other lovers, and beware of going a whoring from him; ſeeing in that caſe we can look for nothing from him, but deſtruction, Pſalm lxxiii. 26.

Q. *What is the neceſſity of communicants ſtudying ſuch a holy and well ordered converſation?*

A. 1. Negatively, It is not to merit or purchaſe heaven, for it is only Chriſt's holineſs and obedience that doth this, and not ours. For, 1. Our holineſs and obedience bears no proportion to the reward of eternal life. 2. The grace that enables us to obey, is freely given us of God. 3. Our obedience at beſt, is imperfect and mixed with ſin. 4. It is our bound duty to God, though no reward at all had been promiſed; upon all which accounts we can merit nothing by any of our ſervices, Job xxii. 3. 1 Cor iv. 7. Pſalm cxliii. 2. Luke xvii. 9, 10.

2*dly*, Poſitively, This holy and well-ordered converſation is abſolutely neceſſary. 1. In reſpect of the command of God, that enjoins it as the beaten road, and pathed way to heaven, peremptorily declaring, 'That without holineſs no man ſhall ſee God,' Heb. xii. 14.

2*d'y*, It is neceſſary, that we may thereby be conformed to our head, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, 1 Pet. i. 15.

3*dly*, That we may teſtify our thankfulneſs to God for his mercies, eſpecially redeeming love, Luke i. 74, 75.

4*thly*, That we may evince and clear up our intereſt in God, and our title to heaven, 1 John ii. 29. Matth. xxv. 30.

5*thly*, That we may be made meet and capable to hold communion with God, here and hereafter. Without holineſs we cannot be prepared either for the employments or enjoyments above, Col. i. 12.

6*thly*, That we may engage ſtrangers to fall in love with Chriſtianity and godlineſs, Matth. v. 16.

Q. *What are the properties of this goſpel converſation, which communicants ought to have after the ſacrament?*

A. 1. It muſt be a good converſation, for ſo it is termed, 1 Pet iii. 16. becauſe it is a converſation with a good God according to a good rule, viz. His word; having good con

pany, viz. His people; and leading to a good end, viz. To be ever with the Lord.

2*dly*, It muſt be an honeſt converſation, ſo it is called, 1 Pet. ii. 12. which includes ſincerity towards God, juſtice in our dealings towards men, and purity and chaſtity in oppoſition to the filthy converſation of the wicked, mentioned 2 Pet. ii. 7.

3*dly*, It muſt be a heavenly converſation, Phil. iii. 20. which includes our deadneſs to earthly things, our imitating the inhabitants of heaven, our delighting in heavenly exerciſes, our ſeeking communion with God, and aiming at heaven as our home.

4*thly*, It muſt be a humble converſation, Mic. vi. 8. which implies, our having a low opinion of ourſelves, our being denied to our own performances, and counting all our own righteouſneſs as filthy rags.

5*thly*, It muſt be joined with a conſtant dependance on Jeſus Chriſt for ſtrength and acceptance in every duty, Cant. viii. 5. John xv. 5.

6*thly*, It muſt be adorned with meekneſs, patience, and contentment in every condition, 1 Pet. iii. 4. Phil. iv. 6, 11, 12.

7*thly*, It muſt be an evenly and ſtedfaſt converſation, endeavouring to hold faſt what we have got at the ſacrament, were it only a good reſolution or purpoſe, and carefully guarding againſt all apoſtacy and backſliding, 1 Cor. xv. 58. Heb. x. 38.

Q. *Wherefore ſhould communicants guard ſo carefully againſt apoſtacy and backſliding after the ſacrament?*

A. 1. Becauſe God is much delighted with his people's ſtedfaſtneſs, earneſtly wiſheth it, and frequently enjoins it, Deut. v. 29. Phil. i. 27, 28. Heb. x. 23. 2 Pet. iii. 17. 2 John 8. Rev. iii. 3. Acts xi. 23.

2*dly*, Becauſe of the ſolemn vows and engagements we have come under to ſtedfaſtneſs, Pſalm cxix. 106.

3*dly*, Becauſe we have many enemies and temptations to draw us from Chriſt and duty.

4*thly*, Becauſe of the many ſad evils and conſequences of apoſtacy, Jer. ii. 19.

5*thly*, Becauſe of our natural inſtability and proneneſs to backſlidings, Hoſ. xi. 7. Jer. xiv. 10. Nay, the beſt of ſaints have been ready to miſcarry after vows and ſignal mercies,

and manifeſtations of God's favour, as might be ſadly verified by the inſtances of Noah, Lot, David, Hezekiah, Solomon, Peter, the Iſraelites, and Chriſt's diſciples.

Q. *What are the evils and ſad conſequences of apoſtacy and backſliding after the ſacrament?*

A. They are many; for thereby we do great and manifeſt injuries, 1. To Jeſus Chriſt. 2. To ourſelves. 3. To others.

Q. *What injury do we to Chriſt by apoſtacy?*

A. 1. We thereby requite his kindneſs to us with baſeſt ingratitude.

2*dly*, We reflect and caſt reproaches upon him as if he were a bad maſter; or by our turning our back upon Chriſt, after we have engaged with him, we on the matter ſay, That, "after trial we find the devil the better maſter of the two;" and this is a greater injury, than if we had given him a flat denial at the firſt.

3*dly*, We hereby open the mouths of Atheiſts, and the enemies of Chriſt to blaſpheme, and ſay, "Where is the "bleſſedneſs that miniſters and profeſſors of religion ſpeak ſo "much of? Where is the ſweetneſs of Chriſt and his way, "that is ſo much talked of? the report we have often heard "is certainly not true, &c."

4*thly*, By apoſtacy from Chriſt, we wound him to the heart, and cauſe him to take up moſt heavy complaints againſt us, as theſe in Iſa. i. 2, 3. Jer. ii. 5, 11, 12, 13. Mic. vi. 3. What a heart-affecting word was that, which Chriſt ſaid to his diſciples in a time of common defection, John vi. 67. 'Will ye alſo go away?'

Q. *What injury do we to ourſelves by apoſtacy?*

A. 1. By forſaking the Lord, we let go our life and all our happineſs at once, Deut. iv. 3, 4. Deut. xxx. 20. John vi. 68.

2*dly*, We loſe all our former pains, and will get no thanks for any thing we have done, Ezek. xviii. 24. 2 John, ver. 8, 9.

3*dly*, We forfeit all fellowſhip and communion with God, in duties and ordinances, Jer. xvii. 5, 6. Heb. x. 38.

4*thly*, We may make ourſelves incapable of ever recovering again, according to that terrible word, Heb. vi. 4, 5, 6.

5*thly*, We make ourſelves the butt of God's fearful threatnings, and expoſe ourſelves to many ſad ſtrokes and plagues

both temporal, ſpiritual and eternal: particularly, apoſtates fall more under Satan's power than ever, like priſoners who have made their eſcape, and are afterwards retaken, their fate is to be loaded with double irons. We know what judgments the Lord inflicted upon Lot's wife, Judas, Spira, Julian, beſides many other apoſtates; and we ſee what he threatens againſt ſuch as do backſlide from him. 1 Chron. xxviii. 9. Pſalm cxxv. 5. Prov. xiv. 14. Jer. v. 6. Heb. vi. 6, 8. 2 Pet. ii. 21.

Q. *What injury do we to others by apoſtacy?*

A. 1. We wrong the godly by ſaddening their hearts and offending them by our carriage.

2*dly*, We wrong the wicked, by hardening them in ſin, ſtumbling them at the good ways of the Lord, and giving them occaſion to think, there is no ſuch excellency in religion, as the goſpel doth report.

Q. *Whence is it that communicants are ſo ready to backſlide, and break their vows after a ſacrament?*

A. In hypocrites, it proceeds mainly from the want of a ſolid root, and good foundation laid in the ſoul, by a thorough work of grace in the heart; for they that begin in hypocriſy, do commonly end in apoſtacy. But in believers themſelves there is alſo great inconſtancy, and proneneſs to backſliding, becauſe of theſe things.

1. The immoderate love and cares of the world, which are moſt dangerous to the ſoul; hence it was, that both Judas and Demas apoſtatized from Chriſt: and hence it is, we ſoon loſe any livelineſs of frame that we get at a ſacrament; which ſhould cauſe us to take heed how we return again to the world after ſuch an ordinance, that it be with jealouſy and holy fear.

2*dly*, Becauſe of our unwatchfulneſs, ſelf-confidence, and ſecurity upon the back of a communion; we are too ready to be puffed up with our privileges and attainments, to think our mountain ſtands ſtrong, and hence, to lift ourſelves up above our neighbours, and deſpiſe thoſe that come not our length; upon which account God is provoked to leave us for a little to ourſelves, as he did Peter on the back of the firſt communion, for the ſame cauſe, and we know what came of him.

3*dly*, Becauſe of Satan's malice and diligence, who ſeeks by all means and deviſes to winnow communicants upon the ick of ſuch an ordinance, that he may ſift away their good

frames, and ſpiritual motions towards Chriſt and heavenly things, Luke xxii 31.

4thly, Becauſe of bad company that is ready to enſnare us to do that which is evil, as it did Peter after the ſacrament; or have a bad influence on us, to cauſe us forget, or neglect that which is good: and therefore we ſhould endeavour to ſhun the company of the wicked, their carnal joy, vain mirth, and worldly diſcourſe, which tend very much to deaden the heart.

5thly, Becauſe of the ſlaviſh fear of man, and of perſecution for adhering to Chriſt and his intereſt. This fear had very bad influences on Peter, when he followed Chriſt to the high-prieſt's hall.

Q. *What courſe ſhall we take, that we may prevent our apoſtacy or backſliding after a ſacrament?*

A. 1. We muſt labour to keep up the conſtant impreſſions of the odiouſneſs of ſin: for if we would 'cleave to that 'which is good,' we muſt ſtill 'abhor that which is evil,' Rom. xii. 9.

2dly, We muſt endeavour to keep up a conſtant high eſteem of Chriſt, and a warm love to him; for we cannot think of parting with that, which we ſincerely love and eſteem.

3dly. Let us beware of entertaining any unmortified luſts, or ſecret idols; for theſe will be fair to looſe our hearts from Chriſt, when religion begins to thwart with them. Herod heard John gladly till once his Herodias was ſtruck at, but then he turned his enemy.

4thly, Let us beware of ſelf-confidence, or high thoughts of ourſelves; for Peter that promiſed moſt in his own ſtrength, was the firſt that denied Chriſt.

5thly, Let us ſtudy to get as much nearneſs and communion with Chriſt as poſſible; and to experience the power of religion in our ſouls, which would be a noble preſervative againſt apoſtacy; for theſe that know moſt of Chriſt will be moſt unwilling to turn their backs upon him, John vi. 68.

6thly, Let us be oft on the mount of contemplation, taking a view of the promiſed land, and the crown laid up for perſeverers in religion, Luke xxii. 28, 29.

7thly, Let us always entertain a jealouſy of our treacherous hearts, and guard againſt the firſt declinings thereof; for happy is the man that thus feareth alway, Prov. xxviii. 14. Judas was the laſt of the diſciples that ſuſpected himſelf, and ſaid,

'Maſter, is it I?' And yet was the firſt that betrayed Chriſt.

8*thly*, Let us be earneſt in prayer, that God may hold us up by the hands of his power and mercy; which have always ſuſtained his people, 1 Pet. i. 5. Pſalm xciv. 18. As the child is never ſo ſafe, as in the nurſe's arms; ſo neither are we ſafe, but when we commit ourſelves, by believing prayer, into the hands of divine power and mercy. And therefore we have ſtill cauſe to pray with the Pſalmiſt, 'Lord hold up 'my goings in thy paths, that my footſteps ſlip not.' Pſalm xvii. 5.

Now to him, who only is able to guide us through the wilderneſs of this world, carry us over the Jordan of death, and land us ſafe in the Canaan of glory, be everlaſting praiſe and glory in the higheſt. *Amen.*

FINIS.

AN

APPENDIX,

CONTAINING

Some THINGS uſeful for YOUNG COMMUNICANTS; ſuch as, *an Example of a perſonal Covenant, with Meditations and Materials for Prayer, before and after Partaking.*

An Example of a Young Communicant's ſecret Tranſacting and Covenanting with God, before his approach to the Lord's Table.

ALmighty God, and Creator of all things, thou didſt make man at firſt upright and happy; but by the fall he is become moſt ſinful and miſerable. I acknowledge, that by nature I am an enemy to thee, a child of wrath, and a ſlave of ſin and Satan. I have been a tranſgreſſor of thy laws from the womb; and it is a wonder of thy patience, that thou haſt not made me a monument of thy wrath in hell, long before this time. O what will become of me to all eternity, if I abide in this ſtate!

I have heard there is mercy in God to loſt ſinners, through the blood of a crucified Jeſus, which revives my drooping ſoul. O can this mercy reach the like of me! But ſurely, the viler ſinner I am, thou haſt the fairer opportunity of ſhewing the freeneſs of thy love, and the efficacy of thy Son's blood; and if I be a ſharer of it, eternal Hallelujahs will be ſung to the Lamb of God on my account. I do therefore come and caſt myſelf down at the feet of infinite mercy, and plead for it, according to thy promiſe through Jeſus Chriſt thy dear Son.

O Father of mercies, and Father of my Lord Jeſus Chriſt I am now ſenſible of my ſin and folly, in rebelling againſt th

and going over to Satan's camp: I desire to return as a penitent prodigal to my heavenly Father, confessing my guilt, and willing to join myself unto the Lord in an everlasting covenant, never to be forgotten: 'O Father, I have sinned 'against heaven and in thy sight, and am no more worthy 'to be called thy child;' but happy would I think myself, if I were admitted to the meanest station or room in thy family. I desire to magnify thy free love and infinite wisdom in contriving a way of salvation to lost sinners through a Mediator, and in sending thy eternally beloved Son to be the Mediator and Surety for satisfying thy justice for them, and for purchasing grace and glory to them. According to thy command, I desire to put honour upon thy Son, and heartily to approve of this device of salvation, as every way worthy of God, and to fall in with it in all respects. O pity thy own creature, the workmanship of thy hands; go over thy work again, and upon Christ's account create me a new after thine own image, that I may be fitted for thy service and glory.

O blessed Jesus, I admire thy love in undertaking to be the surety and sacrifice for lost sinners, and in making offer of thy blood to wash the like of me: welcome, Lord Jesus! I do here disclaim all other ways of salvation, and betake myself to thee, as my only Mediator and Saviour; I do embrace thee in all thy offices, and give up myself to be saved, taught and ruled by thee; I accept of thee as my great high Priest, to atone for my soul, and plead my cause with the Father by thy meritorious death and powerful intercession: I renounce all my own righteousness and worthiness in the business of justification and acceptance with God, and avouch thee alone as the 'Lord my righteousness:' I accept of thee as my great Prophet, and give up myself to thy teaching and instruction, that I may be conducted by thee through the wilderness, and brought safe to heaven at last: O for wisdom to follow thy directions! I do accept of thee as my King, swear allegiance to thee, and heartily consent to thy laws and government; let thy throne be set up in my soul, and all thy enemies under thy footstool: I accept of thee for my husband, and consent to the marriage-covenant in all its articles: I accept of thee as my Captain, and list myself as a soldier under thy banner, to fight in thy strength against all thine enemies. I go in with all thy gospel terms, and am well pleased with the self-denying way of salvation proposed therein: I am [illegible]

to be an eternal debtor to free grace, and that the glory of my ſalvation be for ever aſcribed to Jeſus Chriſt my ſurety.

O Holy Spirit, I thankfully accept of thee as the applier of my Redeemer's purchaſe, and do welcome thee to do thine office in my ſoul, to work faith in me to believe the goſpel, to bring about the change of the new birth, and to renew all my faculties: to thee I am beholden for all the good motions and inclinations excited in me: O let them be continued, and the good work carried forward in me to perfection: I do chuſe thee for my quickener, ſanctifier, and my director through all my pilgrimage: I yield myſelf to thy influences and conduct, and deſire carefully to attend to all thy motions and convictions, both in performing my duty, and in abſtaining from ſin; O work grace in me for that effect, and enable me always to ſtudy and chuſe the things which are pleaſing to thee.

According to my baptiſmal vows, I do here renounce and abandon all the enemies of the holy Trinity, the devil, the world, and the fleſh; and I do here ſurrender myſelf unto thee, Father, Son, and Spirit, one God, to be thine, and only thine; thine and not the devil's, thine and not the world's, thine and not my luſts, thine and not my own; I deſire with my whole heart to chuſe and avouch thee to be my God and everlaſting portion, and alſo to devote and dedicate myſelf, ſoul and body, and all that belongs unto me, to be inſtruments of thy glory, and to be diſpoſed of for thy uſe and ſervice. O do thou henceforth ſet thy mark upon me, as a child born to thee, and formed for thy praiſe; ſtamp me with thy image, that I may be diſtinguiſhed, ſet apart and conſecrated for thy ſervice and glory all my days.

And ſeeing, above all thou requireſt the heart, I do here make an offer and ſurrender of my heart unto thee; Lord, take it, and form it for thyſelf, make it entirely new, make it ſoft, tender, pliable and holy; put thy fear in it, and write thy laws on it, that I may ſerve thee continually, and never depart from thee; Lord, I here give my conſent to thy entering in and taking poſſeſſion of the throne in my ſoul; be therefore call open all the doors of my ſoul, that the King of glory may enter in and dwell for ever. I have found my heart very corrupt, wicked, and deceitful, and will no longer pretend to manage it: but I give it up to thee, to bring every thought and inclination into ſubjection to thee,

I see the world is nothing but vanity and vexation of spirit; I will never any more set my heart upon it, but endeavour to conquer it, and subdue my inclinations to it: I place my happiness only in the enjoyment of God. I view heaven as my country and dwelling-place, and I will henceforth set my face heaven-ward, and spend my life here in God's service, and in communion with him, that I may be meet for the heavenly state.

I will always look upon sin as the enemy of God and the crucifier of Jesus Christ my Saviour, and will pursue it to death; I will never follow a multitude to do evil, but will join myself to the people of God, though they be despised or persecuted; I take Christ with his cross, as well as with his crown, and I cheerfully submit to the rod and discipline of his house: Lord, if thou wilt undertake that thy grace shall be sufficient for me, I shall think nothing too difficult to attempt, or too much to suffer for thee. I desire to learn the life of faith and of prayer: O teach me it, that I may make daily use of Christ my surety, both for justification and sanctification, for strength to perform duty, bear the cross, and resist temptation: I look unto thee to send forth the Spirit into my soul, to assist and strengthen me for every good word and work. Heavenly Father, I take thee for my father, I take Christ for my life, I take the Spirit for my guide, I take thy word for my rule, thy promises for my encouragement, thy testimonies for my counsellors, thy Sabbath for my delight, thy ordinances for my trysting-place, thy people for my companions, thy glory for my end, holiness for my way, and heaven for my home.

Lord, I have no might or strength to keep or perform any thing I have engaged, but undertake all in my surety's strength, depending upon his promise, that he will never leave nor forsake me; in the Lord Jesus only have I righteousness and strength: O Lord, be surety for thy servant for good; give always what thou requirest, and then demand what thou pleasest.

And as an evidence of my sincerity in this solemn profession, dedication, and engagement, I am willing to subscribe with my hand unto the Lord, as I am warranted, Isa. xliv. 5.

'Now, I am thine, Lord save me.'

N. B. As for these who may incline for a different form, and one that may be more suitable to their case, let them

For their help in drawing it up, bear in mind theſe four branches of a covenant-tranſaction with God, renunciation, acceptation, dedication and engagement: and they may enlarge and be particular upon them, or any of them, as it may beſt ſuit the conditions of their ſouls.

Under the head of renunciation, we may enlarge upon our abandoning and forſaking the world and its allurements of profit, pleaſure, honour, and power; Satan and all his tempting baits; the fleſh and all its luſts, our beloved idols, our inward and outward ſins, and our own righteouſneſs in point of juſtification, &c.

Under the head of acceptation, we may inſiſt upon our chuſing and cloſing with God the Father, the Son, the Holy Ghoſt; Chriſt as a Prophet, a Prieſt, a King, a Huſband, a Surety, a Shepherd, a Captain, &c God's covenant, his promiſes, his word, his precepts, his ſabbaths, his ordinances, his people, his providences, his rod, his croſs, &c.

Under the head of dedication, we may expatiate upon our reſigning and giving up to God, our ſouls, with all their faculties, underſtanding, will, memory, conſcience; and their affections, love, hatred, joy, ſorrow, hope, fear; our bodies, with all their ſenſes and members, heads, tongues, eyes, ears, hands, feet; our enjoyments, and all the good things we poſſeſs, ſuch as our health, ſtrength, gifts, intereſt, wiſdom, power, reputation, ſubſtance, relations, times, opportunities, &c.

Under the head of engagements we may run out in reſolving, promiſing and vowing, in Chriſt's ſtrength, to ceaſe to do evil, and learn to do well; to avoid all outward ſins, and theſe which have moſt eaſily beſet us, whether lying, ſwearing, intemperance, unjuſt dealing, ſabbath-breaking, &c. to ſubdue all inward luſts, as pride, paſſion, covetouſneſs, unbelief, &c. to perform all commanded duties, both inward and outward, as keeping of the heart, believing, repenting, meditating, examining ourſelves, reading, hearing, praying, family-worſhip, ſabbath-ſanctification, &c. and alſo we muſt mind to engage to the life of faith, the life of prayer and thankfulneſs, the life of communion with God, the life of new obedience, &c.

SOME

MEDITATIONS AND MATERIALS

FOR

PRAYER,

Proper for COMMUNICANTS before Partaking.

MEDITATION I.

GOD's mercies to me have been very great and diſtinguiſhing. I was born in a valley of viſion, I dwell in a lightſome Goſhen, when many others are covered with Egyptian darkneſs, and ſit in the region of the ſhadow of death. I hear Heaven's free market-day of grace proclaimed when others are tryſted with ſilent ſabbaths. I am invited to a rich goſpel-feaſt, when others are tryſted with a famine of the word of God.

It is a great privilege, that I am allowed to ſpeak to God in prayer, or hear from him in his word; but how great is the honour he puts upon me, when he invites me to a communion with himſelf, at his holy table, where I may feaſt upon the fruits of Chriſt's purchaſe, and hear him ſay to the gueſts, 'Eat, O friends; drink, yea drink abundantly, O beloved.'

Oh! I am unworthy of the leaſt crumb that falls from his table, far leſs of being admitted to ſit with him at the table, and eat of the children's bread.

But ſince he is pleaſed to honour me ſo far, as to call me to the marriage ſupper of the Lamb; O that he would alſo give me the wedding garment, prepare my unprepared heart, and grant me all the ſacramental graces, that I may be in caſe to attend and entertain the King of glory.

O for ſpiritual hunger and thirſt for the ſoul-feaſt, the heavenly manna, and water of life, that is to be ſet before me! O that I had wells digged in this valley of Baca, that heaven's rain would deſcend and fill the pools! That ſo the ſterneſs might be turned into a fruitful field, and the dry

land of my heart into ſprings of water, and my barren ſoul might bloſſom as the roſe, and ſend forth a ſmell as of a field which the Lord hath bleſſed.

I am now to aſcend mount Calvary, and go to the place where Chriſt is to be ſet forth as crucified before mine eyes; O that there I may look on him whom I have pierced, and mourn for ſin, that made the nails, and drove them into my Redeemer! O that I may there receive a broken Chriſt into a broken heart! O that the blood of Chriſt, which ſpeaketh better things than the blood of Abel, may there plead with God for me, anſwer all the challenges of the law, and ſpeak peace to my conſcience! Let him there kiſs me with the kiſſes of his lips, and enable me to embrace him in the arms of my faith, ſaying, 'This is my beloved, and this is my friend.' O for a lively and ſtrong faith, that I may take and hold a ſtrong grip of my Redeemer, that like the ſpouſe I may ſay, 'I held him, and would not let him go!' Alas, for my weak and ſlippery fingered faith, that oft lets Chriſt go, when I have fair occaſions of getting grips of him. Oft do I loſe my grips, Lord faſten them better. Did not Chriſt take faſter grips of me, than I do of him, my ſoul had been in the devil's grips without relief. Ever bleſſed be his name for the ſtrong grips he took and held of elect ſinners on the croſs: yea, ſo ſure and faſt were they, that neither death nor devils, the wrath of God, nor curſes of the law could ever make him looſe them again. Many waters could not quench his love, neither could the floods drown it. His love was ſtronger than death. Oh! where is my love to him? O that the infinite love of Chriſt in dying on a croſs, might kindle in my frozen heart this ſacred fire of love to him, that might burn up all my luſts and idols as ſtubble; and make me cry out, 'None but Chriſt, none 'but Chriſt.'

MEDITATION II.

I Was entered into covenant with God by baptiſm, and was then brought under ſtrong engagements to be the Lord's: but oh! I have broken my covenant, and backſlidden from Chriſt. Were I under the law or a covenant of

works, I would be utterly undone. But, bleſſed be God, I am under the tenders of a covenant of grace, that admits of repentance, and a ſurety for the guilty criminal; and graciouſly promiſeth pardon to the penitent believer: nay, promiſeth repentance to the hard-hearted, faith to the unbelieving, and preſſingly inviteth backſliding children to return to God thro' a Mediator. I do here take hold of this gracious and well-ordered covenant, Lord ſeal it to me at thy table: what ſhall I render to the Lord, for inſtituting this ordinance, for leaving this precious legacy and token of love to his church, for preſerving it to this age, and continuing it in this land: and particularly, for ſparing and allowing me to come unto it? Glory to God, that I ſee the ſeal of this covenant, that I ſee this welcome rainbow appearing in the clouds of wrath, as a ſign and token of God's confirming his covenant to believers, and ſecuring them againſt a deſtroying deluge. Bleſſed be God, that I am neither among Jews or Pagans upon earth; nor devils or damned ſouls in hell. I thank the Lord of heaven and earth, that the things which were hid from the wiſe and prudent, are now revealed unto babes: and that my eyes ſee, and ears hear that which many prophets and kings deſired to ſee and hear; and yet might not: and that now life and immortality are brought to light by the goſpel.

O what would fallen angels, and damned ſpirits give for ſuch a day, and ſuch a proſpect as I have. Lo, fire and brimſtone from heaven is rained upon them, while manna is rained upon me. O that the ſolemn day I have in view, may indeed be a day of the Son of man, a day of his power, and a day in his courts, better and ſweeter to me than a thouſand!

O that the holy table I am going to, may be richly furniſhed by the great Maſter of the feaſt! O that he may grace it with his own preſence, and abundantly bleſs the proviſion! That by it the ſtarving creature may be fed, the needy beggar may be ſatisfied, the hard heart may be ſoftened, the cold affections warmed, the cloudy ſoul brightened, the ſtreamed heart enlarged, the dim eye enlightened, the wandering mind fixed, and the doubting ſoul reſolved. O that it may be a feaſt of fat things full of marrow; a meal ſignally bleſſed from heaven to me! That it may prove life to my ſoul, health to my ſins, ſtrength to my grace, and poiſon to my luſts. Lord, let my heart begin to burn, when I ſee the elements [illegible]

bands be looſed, when I touch them; let mines eyes be lightened, when I taſte them; and let my whole ſoul be ſtrengthened, when I partake of them.

O that in receiving the bread and wine, I may be enabled to receive Jeſus Chriſt into my heart; and may thereby get true and real inſeſtment of all Chriſt's purchaſe, and a valid and unqueſtionable title to the everlaſting inheritance, ſealed and confirmed to me! Lord, make thyſelf known to me in the breaking of bread: manifeſt thyſelf to me, as thou doſt not unto the world. O bring me into the banqueting-houſe, and let thy banner over me be love! Lord, come to the feaſt, for it will be a dead and heartleſs feaſt if thou be abſent: ſit thou at the head of the table, carve every one their portion, and give me a Benjamin's meſs, (if it be thy will) that my ſoul may be ſatisfied as with marrow and fatneſs, and my mouth may praiſe thee with joyful lips. And when the king ſits at his table, let my ſpikenard ſend forth the ſmell thereof: 'Awake, O north-wind, and come thou ſouth, blow upon 'my garden, that the ſpices thereof may flow out: and then 'let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleaſant 'fruits. O let my well-beloved come and feed among the 'lilies, till the day break, and ſhadows flee away.'

MEDITATION III.

BLeſſed are they that hear and know the joyful ſound: but, O what will the news of Chriſt avail me, without an intereſt in Chriſt? What will it profit me, to have the Son revealed to me, if he be not revealed in me?

O for the practical and experimental knowledge of Chriſt! Lord hide not thyſelf from me, ſtand not behind the wall, but ſhew thyſelf to me through the lattice of ordinances. O draw by the vail of my guilt, and make a diſplay of thy glorious and attractive excellencies, that mines eyes may ſee the King in his beauty, and my ſoul may be engaged to flee to him upon the wings of faith and love.

I am this day called to go to the table of this great King: but I am in a ſtrait betwixt two: If I decline to come to this table, then I diſobey my dying Saviour, who commands me

to ſhew forth his death in this manner; if I come unworthily, then I fear leſt I contract the guilt of his blood, and eat and drink my own damnation. Alas, my unworthineſs makes me tremble to come; and yet my need pinches me, ſo that I cannot ſtay away. To whom, Lord, ſhall I go, but to thee; for thou haſt the words of eternal life. Thou art my ſun, from whoſe beams I muſt receive the light of grace. Thou art the fountain, from which I muſt draw living water. Thou art the root, from which I muſt receive ſap of increaſe. Thou art my head, from whom I muſt get life and influence; ſo that without thee, I am nothing, I have nothing, I can do nothing. Let all my wants be upon thee, and let all my ſupplies come from thee. Surely, O Lord, the ſea is not ſo full of water, nor the ſun ſo full of light, as thou art full of grace and mercy. O fill my narrow veſſel out of thy inexhauſtible fountain. Caſt open the doors of thy treaſures, and let me have acceſs to Chriſt's unſearchable riches. Are not theſe freely beſtowed upon the needy, without money and without price? O ſcatter thy bounty among poor beggars, and let me be admitted to gather it. Let not ſuch a miſerable object go from thy door without an alms, for thou wilt not miſs a crumb to me. O let not the needy be forgotten, let not the expectation of the poor periſh for ever. Let none return aſhamed from the fountain, who come expecting water. Haſt thou not ſaid, 'Thou wilt pour water on them that are thirſty, 'and floods upon the dry ground?' And is there any more dry, more poor and needy than I am? Lord, make me as thirſty, as I am dry; as humble, as I am poor; and as ſenſible as I am needy. Open my mouth wide, and then fill it. Alas, the voice of my prayer is weak, but O the cry of my wants is ſtrong: Lord, hear that loud cry. Deal not with me according to my feeling and ſenſe of need, which is ſmall; But O deal with me according to my real neceſſity and thy royal bounty, which is great beyond expreſſion.

Lord, grace thy own ordinance, and beautify the aſſembly of thy people with thy preſence; put the wedding-garment upon the gueſts; let thy Spirit reſt upon them, let thy power be preſent to heal them, and cauſe thy glory fill the temple.

O that God would bow the heavens and come down! O that he would touch the mountains, (viz. hard hearts, unbelief, pride, worldlineſs, &c.) and cauſe them all flow down his preſence! Let the Jordan of my luſts be driven back.

Let the mountains ſkip like rams, and the little hills like lambs. Let the earthly hearts tremble at the preſence of the God of Jacob. Let the rock be turned into ſtanding water, and the flint into a fountain of water.

O come down as the rain upon the mown graſs, and as ſhowers that water the earth, and do thou revive all the withered roots of thy people. O for a ſhower from heaven, even a ſhower of the Holy Ghoſt, to make all their ſouls as a watered garden: that they might ſpring up as the graſs, revive as the corn, grow as the lily, caſt forth their roots, ſpread out their branches, and their beauty might be as the olive-tree, and their ſmell as Lebanon.

O if our Lord Jeſus Chriſt's love and glory would come flowing like a full-ſea, or the ruſhing of a mighty wind, and fill all the corners of his houſe and of his table; that great grace might be on all his people. O to hear a ſound of going in the tops of the mulberry trees, a ſign that God is gone forth before us to ſmite the hoſts of our luſts, and triumph over our enemies. O that the kindly breathings and proſperous gales of God's Spirit would enliven all the drooping hearts, and fill all the empty ſails of wind-bound communicants. O that the heavenly wind would blow from the right airth, that poor leaky veſſels might come ſpeed in their voyage, and ſail ſtraight forward to the ſhore of Emmanuel's land.

MEDITATION IV.

HOW great is the divine goodneſs and condeſcenſion to me, in that he is pleaſed to allow me ſuch near acceſs to him! The men of Bethſhemeſh had not liberty to look into the ark: but I have a warrant, yea a command to contemplate a crucified Jeſus, who is the image of the inviſible God, the brightneſs of his Father's glory, and the expreſs image of his perſon: yea, not only to look to him, but alſo to touch him, handle his wounds, embrace his perſon, and lodge him in my ſoul.

O, Lord, I am not worthy that thou ſhouldſt come under my roof; the houſe is ſo ruinous, ſmoaky, and defiled, thou haſt not a fit place with me where to lay thy head; but ſince

thou didſt not diſdain to lye in a manger among beaſts, nor to dine with Simon the leper; O come and furniſh the houſe, prepare an upper room in my ſoul, and there abide and keep the paſſover with me. A look or word from thee would do it. Lord, ſpeak the word, and thy ſervant's ſoul ſhall be healed and cleanſed. Look thou upon me, and be merciful unto me, as thou uſeſt to do unto thoſe that love thy name.

Happy would I be, if I might get a heart-melting and ſoul-overcoming look of Chriſt's face, at his own table; even of his face that is white and ruddy, and fairer than the ſons of men.

O for ſuch a look as he gave poor Iſrael, when wallowing in his blood, a look that may cauſe me live. O for ſuch a look as he gave backſliding Peter, a look that may pierce my hard heart, and cauſe me to weep bitterly. O for ſuch a look, as he gave the publican Zaccheus; a look that might bring me ſpeedily down from ſins and idols, from my ſelf-conceit and ſelf-righteouſneſs, and cauſe me receive Chriſt joyfully into my heart.

Lord, look all my idols out of countenance, and look my wandering heart into a right frame, for thy work. O come put in thy hand by the hole of the door, and let heaven's ſweet ſmelling myrrh drop upon the handles of the lock, that I may awake from my drowſineſs, and open all my doors to the King of glory. Come in thou bleſſed of the Lord, wherefore ſtandeſt thou without. Come and caſt out all my idols, my worldlineſs, pride, prejudice, doubtings, and unbelief: come lay an arreſt on all my wandering thoughts, and call in my ſtraying affections: come, bind Satan the enemy of my ſoul, and reſtrain him, ſo as I may get my Saviour entertained, and a match concluded betwixt Chriſt and my ſoul at his own table: come in, Lord, and abide in my heart, as long as I abide here in the fleſh. 'Even ſo, 'come Lord Jeſus, come quickly.'

O thou who deliverеſt Noah from drowning in the great deluge, by the ark prepared for him; do thou deliver my ſoul from periſhing in the fearful deluge of thy wrath, by the ark Jeſus Chriſt, whom thou haſt prepared for loving heavy-laden ſinners.

O thou who deliveredſt Lot from Sodom and the flames of fire; deliver my ſoul from the Sodom of a natural ſtate, and from the flames of divine anger, that will conſume ſtuff that abide therein.

O thou who deliveredſt Iſaac from being ſlain and offered up a ſacrifice, by the ram caught in the thickets: O deliver me from being ſacrificed to divine juſtice, by Jeſus Chriſt my propitiatory ſacrifice, in whom thou art well-pleaſed.

I am now to make a near approach to a crucified Chriſt, my ark and city of refuge: O to be ſafely lodged therein! How ſad will it be, if I be found hovering without the ark, till the flood come and waſh me of from the very ſide of it; and even when I ſee a window opened, and mercy's hand put forth to take in poor ſhelterleſs doves! How ſad eternally will it be, to be ſo near Chriſt, within a ſtep of him, and never reach him; but periſh like the thief upon the croſs, with a Saviour at his ſide, and ſink into hell betwixt the outſtretched arms of his mercy, and with his gracious calls ſounding in mine ears! What woful madneſs will it be, willfully to ſtarve for hunger beſide a rich feaſt that is prepared for the hungry! To periſh for thirſt near a full and running fountain! Or to die in my wounds beſide the balm of Gilead, and the ſkilful phyſician there! Let me ſtir up myſelf in time to take hold of him.

O that when I approach ſo near a crucified Jeſus in the Lord's ſupper, I may with Thomas thruſt my hand into his ſide, and alſo throw my heart into it! Let me not only behold the wounds of his ſide, hands and feet, but alſo by faith drink the water of life that runs from them, and bath my ſoul therein!

MEDITATION V.

THE Lord is now calling me as he did Moſes (not out of the midſt of a burning buſh, but out of the middle of the flames of his love) 'Put off thy ſhoes from thy feet, 'for the place whither thou goeſt is holy ground.' O that I may put off the ſhoes of earthly affections, ſtrip myſelf of worldly cares, and look narrowly to my ſteps, when making ſuch a near and ſolemn approach to the great Jehovah. Had not I been invited and commanded to come to his holy table, ſuch a ſinful wretch as I, durſt never have attempted it.

Inſtead of ſtretching forth a ſceptre of mercy to invite me to his table, he might with the rod of his wrath, juſtly have

dashed me in pieces as a potter's vessel. Instead of entertaining me with the bread of life, and the cup of blessing; he might have given me the bread and water of affliction; yea, have thrown me down there, where I should in vain cry out for ever, for a drop of water to cool my tongue.

I am polluted and unfit to appear before God, but oh! they are undone, who keep away from him. I come not to him, because I am unworthy; but because he is rich in mercy, and has contrived a way for saving such as I am. I come as the poor starved wretch to the fire; I come as the hungry to be fed, as the naked to be clothed, as the sick and maimed to be recovered and healed; and as the unclean to be washed in 'the fountain opened to the house of David.'

Lord, make this a healing ordinance to my diseased soul, and the savour of life to my dead heart; make it also a sealing ordinance, to clear up to me the evidences of grace. Confirm to me the pardon of my sins, and the assurance of thy love. O that I may so approach to Christ at his table, that I may return from it with my heavy laden soul disburdened and at rest, my conscience quieted, my corruption subdued, my graces increased, my soul encouraged, and my heart enlarged to run the way of his commandments.

Lord increase my faith, excite my repentance, and warm my cold heart with affection to thyself; O that the love of God were shed abroad in my heart.

Lord, thaw my cold icy heart with the beams of thy love, and breathings of thy Spirit. May I have grace to wait closely upon God, and attend all the motions of his Spirit. And when he draws, O cause me to run; when he knocks, O make me to open; when he blows, O help me to spread the sails; and when the waters are stirred, O let me put in for cure. I am lying like the impotent man at the side of the pool, but of myself, I am unable to step in, and there is no man to put me into it; nay, all the men on earth, or angels in heaven cannot do it; only the man Christ Jesus can give healing virtue to the waters of the sanctuary, and apply them to me.

Lord, bless these who are to be employed as thy stewards, this solemn feast: enlarge their hearts and open their mouths; give them both a door of utterance, and of entrance: Let them speak from the heart, and to the heart. O make their tongues as fined silver, that their words may be power-

ful and pleaſant, ſuitable and fitly ſpoke, like apples of gold in pictures of ſilver. And while they are buſied in inviting, calling, and ſerving others at thy table; let them not go unſerved themſelves.

O that thou wouldeſt deſcend, at this occaſion, upon the mount, in ſight of all the people. Let the Spirit of God with his influences, be like Jordan, at this ſeaſon, to overflow all its banks. O for a bleſſed inundation, and a high ſtream-tide of that river, whoſe ſtreams made glad the city of God! Lord, ſend a ſtream of it into every communicant's heart, and let mine be well watered, and become like the garden of God. O that I had Jacob's ſpiritual ſtrength, I would wreſtle with thee for thy preſence and bleſſing to myſelf and others; I would even ſay, I will not let thee go till thou bleſs me: nay, Lord, I would have the bleſſing, and keep thee too; for thy preſence is the beſt of all bleſſings. And O it is a needful bleſſing at the ſolemn feaſt; what can the people do there without thee? They will be no better than a company of dead carcaſſes ſet about thy table: Oh! there will be no life among them, if the Lord of life be away. If thy preſence, Lord, go not with me, carry me not up hence: the deſire of my ſoul is to thee, and the remembrance of thy name, for there is none in heaven or earth, but thou alone, who can ſuit my ſoul's neceſſities. Nothing leſs than infinite mercy can forgive my ſin: nothing but infinite power can ſubdue my luſts: no leſs than infinite fulneſs can ſupply my wants: and nothing but infinite wiſdom can guide me through this wilderneſs, and bring me to Canaan above.

MEDITATION VI.

SHALL ſuch a wretched dog as I preſume to come unto thy table, and eat of thy children's bread; who am not worthy to gather the crumbs that fall from it? But I have heard of the mercy of the King of Iſrael, that he delights to ſhow it to the unworthy, even to the chief of ſinners. Lord, here is an object of thy pity; I am ſtarving, and have no bread; naked, and have no clothing; wounded, and have no cure; polluted, and have no fountain; in debt, and have

no money: burdened, and have no rest. Thus I have destroyed myself, and have no remedy in myself: but in the name of the Lord Jesus, I have a sure and all-sufficient help.

Lord, I have a multitude of sins and miseries, but thou hast a multitude of tender mercies. I have deep and heinous guilt, but thou hast a deep fountain to wash it out. Behold one depth calleth to another, the depth of my misery, to the depth of thy mercy. My sore is broad, but thy plaister is answerable. My wound is great, but thy balm is excellent. Oh! Lord, be merciful to me, heal my soul, for I have sinned against thee. Come, display the matchless excellencies, and healing virtue of thy balm at this time: and O begin with my distempered soul, and make experiment of it upon me. I am grievously stung with sin and Satan, these fiery serpents: but blessed be God for providing the brazen serpent, and lifting it up on a pole, even Jesus Christ wounded, and lifted up on the cross. O give me faith's eye to spy him thus lifted up, under the symbols of bread and wine: O that I may lift up my eyes and see his healing wounds, and feel healing virtue come from them to my wounded soul.

Lord, draw me, and I will run after thee, cast a cord of thy love about my heart, and hale me to thee. Oh! but my heart, my soul is heavy, I have great guilt, and many lusts like lumps of lead hanging at me: how can I run, and how shall I be drawn? But hast thou not said, Lord, 'if I be 'lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men unto me;' sinners of all sorts and sizes. Surely a crucified Jesus lifted up on a cross, with his bleeding arms stretched out, to embrace lost sinners, is the most attractive and drawing sight in the world. This wonderful loadstone hath drawn thousands of iron hearts to it at once: and shall my obstinate heart refuse to be drawn! O give me faith's eyes, and let me see the glorious conqueror, Jesus, dying and drawing his poor captives home to himself; and let my heart be drawn with the rest.

Now the devil is holding, and Christ is drawing: now Michael and his angels, and the dragon and his angels are striving about communicant's soul's; O that Michael may prevail, and his followers be increased. O that the red dragon's head may be broken, and his interest get a fatal blow at this time.

Lovely Jesus, shew thyself at this occasion through the lattice, 'for thou art fairer than the sons of men, more glorious 'than mountains of prey, and the chiefest among ten thou-

'fand.' Thou art white and ruddy, white, in regard of thy ſpotleſs innocence; and ruddy, in regard of thy bloody paſſion; and this matchleſs complexion makes thee all together lovely in the eyes of all true believers. O bright morning ſtar! I beſeech thee ſhew me thy glory. Make thy holy table like mount Tabor to me, the mount of tranſfiguration, where I may get a heart-raviſhing ſight of Chriſt's beauty, and ſuch a view of his comelineſs, as may ſatisfy my mind, captivate my heart, and make me long to be where I ſhall have the full and everlaſting viſion of his face.

Lord, meet with me at thine own table, and ſhew me a token for good. Deliver my ſoul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling. Reſcue me from the fearful pit, bring me out of the miry clay; ſet my feet upon a rock, and eſtabliſh my goings; and put a new ſong in my mouth, even praiſe unto our God. Behold, O God our ſhield, and look upon the face of thine anointed, even thy beloved Son in whom thou art well-pleaſed. Lord, ſhew thyſelf well-pleaſed with me in him: and let me be accepted in the beloved.

Lord, ſay unto my ſoul, fear not, I am thy ſalvation. Thy voice is ſweet, O cauſe me to hear it. And make me hear thee, ſo as I may follow thee; and follow thee, ſo as I may find thee, and find thee, ſo as I may never loſe ſight of thee again.

MEDITATION VII.

O Whither am I going, the place is holy, the table is holy, the bread I am to eat is holy, the cup I am to drink is holy; and God, who is infinitely holy, is 'terrible from his holy places.'

A wrong touch or look now is criminal, and may coſt me dear, as it did Uzzah and the Bethſhemites. This fearful breach that was made on them, may cauſe me tremble, and cry out, 'Who is able to ſtand before this holy Lord God?'

If John the Baptiſt (one of the greateſt that was born of women, and filled with the Holy Ghoſt from the womb) thought himſelf not worthy to unlooſe Chriſt's ſhoes; O!

much more unworthy am I (the meaneſt of creatures, yea, a tranſgreſſor from the womb) to be admitted to touch, nay, feed upon Chriſt's broken body and ſhed blood!

If Peter, having ſeen Chriſt's glory and his own vileneſs, thought himſelf unworthy to be in the ſame ſhip with Chriſt, and cried out, 'Depart from me, for I am a ſinful man;' how ſhall I, who am the chief of ſinners, adventure to ſit at the ſame table with him, and feed upon his fleſh and blood!

If the poor woman who had the bloody iſſue, feared ſo to come, and touch the hem of Chriſt's garment; how much more may I, who am full of the running iſſues of ſin, fear to touch the ſacred ſymbols of his body and blood, and to put my hand into his wounds, and feel the print of the nails! Lord, if the holy angels, theſe pure and unſpotted ſeraphims, who burn in zeal for thy ſervice, muſt even cover their faces before thee; O how dare I appear in thy preſence, whoſe zeal is ſo languiſhing, whoſe love is ſo cold, whoſe mind is ſo earthly, and prayers ſo dull!

But what ſhall I then do? Shall I with thoſe who were bidden to the king's feaſt, refuſe and make my excuſe? Oh! I fear then the king would be angry, declare me unworthy to taſte of his ſupper, and ſwear in his wrath, that I ſhall never enter into his reſt.

I confeſs, Lord, I am fallen aſleep with the fooliſh virgins, I find no oil in my lamp to go and meet the bridegroom at his table. But bleſſed be thy name, the market of grace is not yet ended: I will therefore go preſently to thoſe that ſell it, not to the merit of ſaints or blood of martyrs; but to Jeſus Chriſt himſelf, who has graciouſly counſelled me to buy of him tried gold, and precious oil, that will ſtand me in ſtead in time of need. O that my oil, and my lamp may be lighted at the beams of the ſun of righteouſneſs, and ſo it ſhall never be put out!

Many pieces of furniture do I need, I want the girdle of ſincerity, the ſhield of faith, the helmet of hope, the ſword of the Spirit, the breaſt-plate of righteouſneſs, and to have my feet ſhod with the preparation of the goſpel of peace. But praiſes to my Redeemer and Captain of ſalvation, that has provided a full ſtore-houſe and armory to anſwer all my ſoul's neceſſities. O that out of his fulneſs I may receive grace for grace!

Lord, theſe things are ſo valuable, I have not wherewith

to buy them, for I am wretched, miſerable, poor, blind and naked. But good news! The pooreſt perſon in the world can make this purchaſe, for all goſpel wares and commodities are bought without money and without price. O let me win to this cheap market, and be content to take all out of Chriſt's hand, as a free gift, diſclaiming any worthineſs in myſelf!

Lord, furniſh me freely with all the qualifications and grace which I need: and when I come, and offer my gift at thy altar, I'll ſay with David; all things come of thee, and of thine own have I given thee. For what have I but what I have received? Nay, I'll join with the redeemed for ever in their ſong; Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be glory.

MEDITATION VIII.

IF the centurion, whoſe faith was ſo ſtrong and lively, that Chriſt ſaid, he had not ſeen ſuch faith in Iſrael, yet was fain to ſay to Chriſt, 'Lord, I am not worthy that thou 'ſhouldeſt come under my roof;' what ſhall I think of myſelf, who have ſo little faith, and ſo much unbelief? Can I think myſelf worthy that Chriſt ſhould come into my heart? O! I am utterly unworthy of ſuch a gueſt: but ſeeing ſo great a king is willing to lodge in ſo poor a cottage; Lord, ſend before hand, and furniſh it for thyſelf. O let thy Spirit come and adorn the upper-room, and make me all glorious within! O for a penitent ſoul and a believing heart!

Moſes of old with his rod, ſmiting the rock, brought forth running water. O if Chriſt with the rod of his word, would but touch my heart, it would ſoon melt into tears of repentance. Alas, my hard heart will neither break nor melt, till the Spirit of Chriſt come and deal with it. Lord, though I have not tears enough with Mary Magdalene to waſh thy feet; yet thou had blood enough to waſh my feet, head, heart, hands, and altogether: O bring my polluted impenitent heart to that fountain; I know nothing will bring tears from mine eyes, and ſorrow from my heart, if a believing view of that blood do it not.

O for the eyes of faith to look to Golgotha and Gethſ

mane, and view Chriſt's agony and bloody ſweat, and the plentiful ſtreams of his blood that flowed down from the croſs, O that I could remember the wormwood and the gall, the cries and tears, the curſes and pains, the deſertion and anguiſh, which my ſins brought upon the Son of God. O how did they pierce his head with thorns, his hands with nails, his ſide with a ſpear, and his heart with ſorrows! O the ſharpneſs of that ſword that pierced his ſoul! O the bitterneſs of that cup which he drank for me, a cup all mingled with the guilt of my ſins, and the curſes of a broken law! O can I go to his table, look to his bleeding wounds, hearken to his dying groans, ſee my Redeemer's heart melted like wax; and yet my heart continue hard and unbroken! O ſhall the rocks rent ſooner than my heart!

O my ſoul, where is thy faith? Where thy bowels? Where thy gratitude? Where thy humanity? Come then, behold the Author of life becoming obedient unto death; the ſpring of bleſſedneſs under-lying the curſe; the fountain of happineſs thrown into miſery, nay, into hell, and all to ſave thee from it. O behold thy glorious ſurety with his head bowing on the croſs, and inclining to die. Behold his innocent hands that healed all ſorts of diſeaſes, and were ſtill doing good, pierced and beſprinkled with his own blood. Behold his feet that never ſtood in the way of ſinners, but always walked in the law of the Lord, with ſharp and long nails faſtened to the croſs. Behold his ſide opened with a cruel ſpear, and all red with his own blood. Behold his bowels that yearned for ſinners, now ſhrunk and dried up. Behold his face that was fairer than the ſons of men, now defiled with the ſpittings of the ungodly. Behold his mouth that ſpake as never man ſpake, hath no other refreſhment but vinegar and gall. Behold his ears that wont to hear the angels praiſes, now ringing with the mocks and blaſphemies of the wicked. Behold theſe eyes that were brighter than the ſun, now darkened with the ſhadow of death. Oh! now I ſee the Sun of righteouſneſs under a fearful eclipſe. I ſee his ſpotleſs ſoul covered with the black clouds of the Father's wrath; I ſee the heavens ſhut and darkened againſt him in the time of his diſtreſs. I ſee his royal viſage turned pale, his ſtrength dried up like a pot-ſherd, his tongue cleaving to his jaws, and the ſtreams of his precious blood watering his pierced feet.

O ſhall I thus ſee the innocent Lamb of God, ſuffering ſo

crifice to incenſed juſtice, for my heinous guilt, and not loath myſelf for all my abominations? O curſed ſin? murderer of the Son of God! ſhall I ever harbour it any more? Oh, let me never look upon it, without tears of grief; nor think of it, without indignation and riſing of heart. O that henceforth the face of ſin may be more frightful to me than hell, and temptations to it more terrible than death.

MEDITATION IX.

UNDER the law, they who had touched the dead were forbid to come near the altar, upon which were offered ſacrifices, that were but types of Chriſt upon the croſs; and ſhall I who am by nature dead in ſins and treſpaſſes, and perform nothing but dead works, be allowed to approach that holy table, where a living Saviour and a living God is preſent.

Bleſſed be the Lord Jeſus that has come to viſit the dead though rotting and ſtinking in the grave. O that I may be raiſed up by the word of his power, as Lazarus of old was, and all my bonds looſed, that I may be at liberty to worſhip and ſerve him. And O that I may be allowed to be at the table with him, as was Lazarus after he was raiſed by him from the dead.

Lord, though I be dead in ſins and treſpaſſes, yet the bread which thou haſt prepared, cannot only ſtrengthen the living, but can alſo give life to the dead. Art thou not the reſurrection and the life, who canſt raiſe the dead to life, and call things that are not, as though they were? O cauſe me to hear thy quickening voice.

Bleſſed be God, for the encouragement he hath given me, to come to this great feaſt. It being a feaſt of charity, to which are invited not the rich; but the poor, maimed, lame and blind, who cannot make any return to the Author of it. My bleſſed Saviour while he was on earth, diſdained not to eat with publicans and ſinners: and ſurely though he be now highly exalted in glory, he ſtill retains the bowels of a man, and all the pity and charity to periſhing ſouls, that ever he had.

Lord, I am polluted, but will not despair, for with thee is the fountain of salvation. I am poor, but will not despond, for thou art the Lord of the whole earth, and openest thy treasures to the needy. I am naked, but I will not run away with Adam, and hide myself from thee, because I am so; but I will come with the more speed to thee, to cover me with the wool and fleece of the Lamb of God, even the spotless righteousness and innocence of my Saviour. All my righteousness is as filthy rags; but Lord, clothe me with the goodly raiment of my elder brother, which hath a sweet smell in my nostrils, that therein I may obtain the blessing of my Father, and a title to the inheritance: and let me by my Saviour's grace, be enabled to offer thee a sincere and contrite heart, which is a savoury meat, in which thou takest special delight. 'A broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise,' Lord, break my hard heart.

And will God, in very deed, dwell and converse with men, yea, sinful men? With thee, Lord, is great and terrible majesty: nay, to the wicked and Christless, thou art a consuming fire. But, glory to thy name, I see thee seated upon a throne of grace, that a poor sinner like me, may draw near and converse with thee: yea, I see a rain-bow about thy throne, a sure token of thy mercy and willingness to be reconciled to sinners through thy Son Jesus Christ. I see thee in the word and sacraments, reaching forth thy sceptre of grace, that I may come and touch the top of it and live. Lord, all my hope is in the mercy of thy bowels, and the merits of Christ's death. Surely, thou art more ready to give than I am to ask; and more willing to forgive than I am to repent.

I am now going to a great feast, Lord forbid it be to me like Belshazzar's feast, who in the time of it, perceived a hand writing his condemnation. But, O that I may see the finger of God writing my eternal absolution, and assuring me that God will not enter into judgment with me! And as of old, thy gracious presence in Solomon's temple, was manifested by the fire which came down from heaven, and consumed the burnt-offering: so, I beseech thee to send from heaven into my heart, the fire of thy love, to consume my little, base affections to thee, and make my prayers more fervent.

Lord, thou usest not to send beggars away from thy feasts without an alms. Yea, thou hast oft been found of them that sought thee not; and hast made surprizing and unexpected

visits to poor souls, and made them before they were aware, like the chariots of Aminidab. O that I could win near hand Christ at his table, O that I may be allowed to kiss his feet, hear his voice, feel the smell of his garments, and the savour of his sweet ointments. Amen.

SOME

MEDITATIONS AND MATERIALS

FOR

PRAYER,

Proper for COMMUNICANTS after Partaking.

MEDITATION I.

WHAT shall I render to the Lord, for all his gifts and benefits unto me? The royal Psalmist admires divine goodness, in causing the sun, moon, and stars to shine in the firmament, for man's behoof; and cries, 'What is man that 'God is mindful of him!' But surely, more cause have I to cry so, when I consider, how God has caused the Sun of righteousness to shine on me, in the firmament of gospel ordinances, and made the day-spring from on high to visit me: O that I may find this heavenly light shining into my heart.

The same Psalmist also exalts God's goodness, in giving the beasts of the field, fowls of the air, and fishes of the sea to be food for man; but far greater cause have I to praise God's infinite mercy for giving me the flesh and blood of his only Son, to feed and preserve the life of my soul.

The poor woman of Canaan asked only leave to gather the crumbs which fell from the children's table; but unworthy I have been admitted to sit at the table of the Lord, and eat of the children's bread! Nay, I have been invited to eat heartily, and drink abundantly. Seeing then I have eaten of Christ's meat, O that in the strength of it, I may travel a good journey, and work a good turn for Christ! O that I may be a diligent and faithful servant to so good a master! Lord, I have eaten of thy bread, let me never lift up the heel against thee.

Nay, Lord, I have gone to thy table, and adventured to ſeal a marriage-contract with Jeſus Chriſt, as my Lord and huſband: I am indeed a black and uncomely bride; but my glorious huſband can beautify me with his perfect comelineſs put upon me. Let me for ever diſcharge my old huſbands and lovers, the law, my own righteouſneſs, the world, my luſts and idols, and never have any hankering thoughts after them. O that I may be looking long, and providing for the marriage day! The Bridegroom is ready long ſince, O that I were ready to go forth and meet him! That will be a glorious day, when he will rend the clouds, come down and ſet tryſt with me in the air; and ſend his angels to carry me up to meet with him there. Why then doth he delay his coming? Not becauſe he is unready, but becauſe I am not ready, and all the elect are not yet gathered in. O that I were made meet and prepared for his coming; and my heart and thoughts were ſtill with him!

I have now a journey to go, and a race to run, even a race to heaven, and I have great need of ſtrength and direction in it. O if Chriſt would take me up into his chariot of ſalvation, that is all paved with love, how eaſily would I ſit, and how ſafely and pleaſantly would I travel in the King's high road towards Emmanuel's land! What ſweet views and proſpects would I get from Chriſt's triumphal chariot! O the lovely hills, the fruitful valleys, and pleaſant rivers, the fair gardens and flouriſhing trees, which I might ſee in the heavenly Canaan! What ivory palaces, golden ſtreets, and gates of pearl might I ſee in the new Jeruſalem! O could I travel in Chriſt's company, my journey would not be tedious to me!

MEDITATION II.

IF he, that wanted the wedding-garment at the King's table, was caſt into outer darkneſs, where ſhall be weeping and gnaſhing of teeth; what ſhall come of theſe, who have come to Chriſt's table, not only wanting the wedding-garment, but even clad with Satan's livery, wearing the rags of the old man, and drawing the chains of iniquity about with them! Lord, had'ſt thou dealt with me, and my ſelf in com-

municants, according to our ſins, nay, according to our religious ſervices, thou hadſt made the congregation an Acelda-ma, a field of blood! Alas! we have mingled our ſacrifices with our ſins, no wonder, though thou hadſt mingled them with our blood. But bleſſed be thy name, who, inſtead of deſtroying us with the breath of thy mouth, art pleaſed to breathe forth ſuch words of comfort to us. 'I will not exe-'cute the fierceneſs of my wrath, becauſe I am God and not 'man. I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye ſons of 'Jacob, are not conſumed.' Merciful God, thou forbids men to give that which is holy to dogs, and caſt pearls before ſwine; and yet in thy boundleſs compaſſions, thou giveſt thy Son who is the holy one of God, and the moſt precious pearl in heaven, unto ſuch miſerable ſinners as I am, even to me, who have ſo oft promiſed to live holily, and to leave my ſins; and yet have ever returned to my vicious courſe, as the dog to his vomit again, and the ſow that was waſhed to her wallowing in the mire. But ſeeing God has been yet again offering and ſpeaking peace to me, O let me never again return to folly. Lord, ſave me from making peace again with theſe luſts, which nailed Chriſt's hands, and made his ſoul heavy unto death. May I now be helped to abandon all my old ſins, and never venture again upon that which killed my Saviour, diſhonours his Father, grieves his Spirit, and damns my own ſoul.

Lord Jeſus, undertake for me, deliver me from my ſpiritual enemies, and eſpecially from myſelf, and from my falſe and treacherous heart, which hath ſo oft beguiled me, and yielded me a prey to ſin, Satan and the world, and will now be ready to do it over again, if it be not prevented by thy grace. I have great need to be always near thee; for without thee I can do nothing but ſin; I can do nothing but contract defilement for thee to waſh, make wounds for thee to heal, and take on debt for thee to pay. O Lord, my poor ſoul is oft like a leaky veſſel which is heavy laden, and ready to ſink; the tempeſt of wrath blows hard, and threatens to overſet me; O that I may get my veſſel run aſhore near the rock Chriſt, ſo that if it break or ſhipwreck any where, it may be about the clefts of this rock, where many a ſhipwreckt periſhing ſoul hath found ſafety! O, who ever periſhed at Chriſt's lee-ſhore! Who ever drowned in the ſea of wrath, that ſincerely aimed to grip to, and faſten upon the clefts of this rock!

MEDITATION III.

THE Manna in the wilderneſs was lodged in the tabernacle, and kept within a pure golden pot. And ſhall I lodge Jeſus Chriſt, the Manna that came down from heaven in a corrupt and unclean heart? Lord, cleanſe my heart from ſin, and furniſh it with grace, that it may be fit for thy reſidence! O that by taſting of the Manna, I may find my ſoul ſtrengthened, and luſts weakened! O that by touching the border of Chriſt's garment, I may feel a ſecret virtue gone out of him, to ſtop the running iſſue of my corruption, and heal all my ſoul-diſeaſes!

Jonathan's eyes were enlightened after he had eaten a little honey dropping in a wood; but I have been eating honey dropping from the Rock of ſalvation, Jeſus Chriſt; O that I may find the eyes of my underſtanding illuminated therewith, that I may clearly perceive the vanity of the world, and excellency of Chriſt; the deformity of ſin, and beauty of holineſs; the emptineſs of my own righteouſneſs, and the all-ſufficiency of Chriſt's merits!

Men admire Abraham's happineſs, in that he lodged angels; but how far greater is my happineſs, in lodging him whom the angels adore, and in whoſe preſence they all cover their faces with their wings, and cry, 'Holy, holy, holy, Lord God almighty, &c.' O that I had ſuitable room and entertainment for ſo glorious a gueſt! Lord, thou muſt both fit the room, and bring the entertainment with thee.

O be not a ſtranger unto me, or a way-faring man that only turns aſide to lodge for a night; but let Chriſt dwell in my heart by faith. O that he may ſay of my heart, 'This is my 'reſt for ever, here I will dwell, for I have deſired it.' Lord, ſay this alſo of thy Zion in our land, and eſtabliſh thy throne amongſt us.

Lord, thou haſt promiſed many ſpecial bleſſings to the utmoſt ends of the earth, and to the iſles afar off in the ſea, among whom we in this land are: O haſten the accompliſhment of thy promiſes to theſe remote parts of the earth, and make the ſpirit of error, ſuperſtition and formality whic[illegible] out of them, that thy name may be great among us, and in every place incenſe may be offered to thee, and a pure [illegible]

Lord, ſend the news of Chriſt to the heathen nations [illegible]

have long dwelt in the region of darkneſs. How ſad is it, that God who made all the world, ſhould have ſo little of its ſervice; and that the devil who ruined mankind, ſhould have the far greater part of the world to adore and ſerve him! Alas, that he ſhould have ſo much to juſtify that uſurped title of his, 'The God of this world!' Lord, deſtroy his kingdom, and haſten the downfal of Babylon; when ſhall the forty and two months be expired. Let the hills melt, and the mountains flow at the preſence of the Lord, and the ſeven hills among the reſt. O why is his chariot ſo long a coming? Why tarry the wheels of his chariot?

Lord, remember the poor blinded Jews, the poſterity of Abraham thy friend, Oh, we are many a prayer behind with them, they oft minded the little ſiſter, when ſhe had no breaſts; and now the elder ſiſter hath none. O what ſhall be done for her in her deſolate caſe! O that the Redeemer would come to 'Zion and turn away ungodlineſs from Jacob.' Lord, lift up thy feet to theſe perpetual deſolations, and let the receiving of them be as life from the dead.

Lord, plead for thy perſecuted people all the world over; let their enemies know that their Redeemer is mighty, and will hear the ſighs of the oppreſſed. Let the earth diſcloſe her blood, and no more cover her ſlain.

MEDITATION IV.

O That I could wonder at the glorious Son of God, who deſcended from the higheſt heavens, and took not on him the nature of angels, but the nature of man, and hath crowned it with glory and immortality, yea, hath carried it above all heavens, above the ſeats of angels, beyond the Cherubims and Seraphims, and hath placed it on the right hand of his eternal Father! and hath likewiſe promiſed to exalt believers (whom he hath united to himſelf, as members of his body) unto the ſame honour and dignity! Lord, what is man that thou art thus mindful of him! and what am I, the worſt of men, that I ſhould be admitted to ſhare in theſe glorious privileges which Chriſt hath purchaſed!

O that I could ſing a ſong of praiſe to my well-beloved;

a ſong of his eternal love and glorious undertaking; a ſong of his paſſing through the Red-ſea, and fighting the red dragon; a ſong of his bruiſing the ſerpent's head, and unſtinging the king of terrors; a ſong of his victorious reſurrection, triumphant aſcenſion, and glorious return! Lord cheer up and tune my heart to ſing a ſong of Zion, and rejoice in Chriſt as my portion. Let me ſpeak of the glorious honour of his majeſty, and declare his wondrous works.

Lord, revive the ſpirits and enlarge the hearts of all thy people, give them high and exalted thoughts of Chriſt, that their ſoul may glorify thy name. Open thou their lips that their mouths may ſhew forth thy praiſe. Oh! ſhall the wicked go ſinging and rejoicing to hell, and thy people go always drooping and ſorrowing to heaven? Is there any maſter like Chriſt, and can give any wages like to his! Let me never by my carriage bring up a bad report (as the unfaithful ſpies) upon Chriſt's way, or the land that is afar off. Thou haſt recorded many encouraging words for thy people's comfort. Thou haſt ſaid, 'That light is ſown for the righteous, and 'gladneſs for the upright in heart.' O for a ſhower from heaven to make that ſeed to ſpring. Bleſſed be thy name, God's ſeed will not rot beneath the clods, it will ſpring up ſooner or later. Let me ſupport myſelf with the Pſalmiſt's cordial, 'The Lord liveth, and bleſſed be my rock!' Why ſhould believers look like dead men, while their Lord liveth, and their rock ſtandeth? Their hopes may die, their comforts die, their frames die, their relations, their gifts and outward means may all die; but good news! their Lord will not die, their rock will not fall. No wonder though the diſciples drooped and looked as dead men, when Chriſt was dead and lying in the grave. But, bleſſed be God, he is riſen, he liveth, and will die no more. I have theſe good news from his own mouth, 'I am he that liveth, and was dead, and behold 'I am alive for evermore, Amen, and have the keys of hell 'and death.' Is my Redeemer jaylor of the priſons of hell and the grave? Good news! he will not lock in any of his friends or lovers; none but his enemies and haters ſhall be made priſoners there.

Many are the comforts thou giveſt, Lord, unto thy people; but let me not adore thy comforts more than thyſelf, or love the apples of life more than the tree of life; let Chriſt himſelf have ſtill the chief room in my ſoul.

MEDITATION V.

WHO can utter the mighty acts of the Lord? Who can ſhew forth all his praiſe? From all eternity, thou didſt mercifully foreſee man's miſery, and contrive a remedy for it; thou provideſt a ſurety for him before the debt was contracted, and a Saviour before he was loſt. Thy wrath ſoon broke out againſt the angels that fell; thou waiteddſt not for their repentance, but preſently condemned them to everlaſting chains of darkneſs. But long haſt thou waited on me; yea, followed me with mercy, and that even after I had many times undervalued and trampled upon the greateſt gift and richeſt jewel of heaven, Jeſus Chriſt.

Heavenly Father, though I have been a prodigal and runaway from thy houſe, yet graciouſly own me again, upon my return for thy child. I am a poor deſtitute orphan, that can do nothing for myſelf, but in thee the fatherleſs findeth mercy. I am a helpleſs and needy child hanging at the breaſts of ordinances. O let them not prove dry breaſts to me, nor let me ſuck wind or poiſon from them, as many do to their deſtruction: but let me ſuck the ſincere milk of the word, for my growth and enlargement in thy ways.

Lord, thou haſt directed thy people, 'in malice to be children, but in underſtanding to be men;' many, alas, are found the very reverſe of this; 'in underſtanding they are 'children, but in malice they are men.' Lord, free me of the leaven of malice, of pride and envy. A child I am, alas, in knowledge, O that I were ſuch in duty and affection. Lord, make me like a little child, meek and humble, obedient and tractable, affectionate and full of regard to thee my heavenly Father. O that I were born again, and had the ſpirit of adoption in me, enabling me to cry, Abba Father; and inclining me to be much about my Father's hand. My needs are very great, but bleſſed be thy name thou haſt erected a throne of grace for me to come to, in the time of need.

Many are the needs, which thou haſt left upon me, that I might have the more errands to thy throne, and thou mayeſt the oftner hear my voice. Lord, pour out upon me a ſpirit of grace and ſupplication, and cauſe me to delight in approaching to thee.

Lord, help me to remember the vows and ſolemn engagements I have been taking on. I have been giving thee my bond at a communion-table, for thankfulneſs, love and obedience: O let me have Chriſt's back-bond for my relief, that he will ſtrengthen me by his powerful grace, to pay my vows to God, for I do entirely diſtruſt my own ſtrength. O that my obedience may be univerſal, cheerful, conſtant, and growing like the morning light.

Give me grace always to believe and remember the end of my creation, and the vanity of this world; the ſhortneſs of my life, and the uncertainty of the time of my death; the miſeries of ſuch as die in their ſins, and the unſpeakable joys of thoſe who die in the Lord.

MEDITATION VI.

I Have been ſwearing allegiance to the King of heaven over the broken body, and ſhed blood of his dear Son. And ſeeing I have now opened my mouth unto the Lord, O ſave me from going back. Yea, I have been lifting myſelf as a ſoldier to fight under the banner of Jeſus Chriſt, as the captain of my ſalvation; and my captain has been giving me a feaſt to hearten and encourage me againſt all difficulties. O that I may be ſtrengthened by it, to fight manfully againſt all his and my enemies, yea, and prevail over them, and put to flight the armies of the aliens. Alas, I muſt confeſs to my ſhame, that I have often fainted and turned back in the day of battle, I have gone from Chriſt's ſtandard into the enemy's camp. O for the ſhield of faith! O for grace to depend more upon my captain for ſtrength and furniture, whether for work or warfare, duty or difficulty! Lord, leave me not to tug at the oar of unaſſiſted endeavours, or to ſtruggle with duty in my own ſtrength; but help me always to look to my covenanted Lord, for covenanted ſtrength. O let covenanted grace be ſufficient for me.

May I now be going on from ſtrength to ſtrength, from degree of grace to another; from one evidence, experience manifeſtation to another, till at length I appear before in Zion. Let me forget theſe things that are behind,

and reach forth to theſe things which are before, and ſo preſs on toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Chriſt Jeſus. And let me count all things but dung and loſs, that I may win Chriſt and be found in him, not having my own righteouſneſs, but his to clothe me.

My days are flying away as a ſwift poſt, eternity is haſtening on with wings; much of my hand-breadth of days is worn away, and ſoon will my ſun be turned, and be very low: O that I may be near my lodging againſt night. The blaſt of the laſt trumpet is at hand, and a proclamation will ſhortly be made by one ſtanding in the clouds, that time ſhall be no more. O that I may improve precious time well while it laſts, and run faſt, with my eyes toward heaven as my home and everlaſting lodging place. It is an encouragement to run, that Chriſt is in heaven before me; God ſend us a joyful meeting. Lord, give me the traveller's charges by the way, ſomething to ſweeten my journey, and make it lightſome. O where are the grapes of Eſhcol, the cordials of faith, the proſpects of Canaan from Piſgah hill? O that I were frequently ſending faith and hope, theſe two faithful ſpies, to ſurvey the promiſed land, or at leaſt to viſit the borders and outer coaſt of my Lord's country; that they might bring me back ſome encouraging reports, to ſupport and cheer my heart while in the wilderneſs.

Lord, my wants are many, and I need daily ſupplies from thee, but bleſſed be God, that I have ſuch an agent in heaven as Chriſt to preſent my bills, petitions, and ſupplications. I put all my requeſts in his hand, and leave them to his care and management, who knows the fit time to preſent them, and ſend me an anſwer of them. I deſire to put him on all my ſecrets, and truſt him with all my concerns.

Lord, ſtay not away from me, but let me have ſome gracious viſits now and then in thy ordinances. Give me thy Holy Spirit to teach me, when I am ignorant; to quicken me, when I am dull; to awaken me, when I am ſecure; to revive me, when I am faint. Let thy good Spirit be ſtill ſuggeſting things to me, and bringing thy word and promiſes to my remembrance, that my hard heart may now and then guſh forth in ſtreams of love and deſire towards thee. O divine ſhepherd, thou haſt refreſhment for my wearineſs, guidance for my wanderings, and balm for my wounds. O lead me in the pleaſant paſtures, that are watered by the fruitful ſtrea

of thy Spitit, that ſo this tempeſt-beaten ſoul may at laſt be brought into the harbour of reſt, and be laid up ſecurely with thee.

MEDITATION VII.

GLORY to God, that hath not withheld his Son, even his only Son from me, but hath given him to be a propitiation for my ſins, yea, and to be the life and food of my ſoul. Bleſſed be his name, that he who offered himſelf for me upon the croſs, doth alſo offer himſelf to me at his table. O that the ſacrifice of Jeſus Chriſt, which he offered on the croſs, and which I have been commemorating at his table, may atone for all the failings and miſcarriages both in my preparations and performances! O bleſſed for ever be the Lord Jeſus, for the wounds which he received on the croſs, for my ſins! O print them deeply on my heart, that I may ſtill remember them, and continually bear about with me 'the dying of the Lord Jeſus,' that the life alſo of Jeſus may be manifeſted in me.

I have been eating the bread of my Father's houſe, O let me not return to feed on the huſks of the world and ſin. But as I have the Lord Jeſus, ſo help me to walk in him. Uphold me by thy right hand, and let none pluck me out of it; and according to the well-ordered covenant. O put thy fear in my heart, that I may never depart from thee. O thou that giveſt power to the faint, and increaſeth ſtrength to them that have no might, and who art only able to keep me from falling, O ſtabliſh, ſtrengthen, and ſettle me. Lord, never leave nor abandon me to myſelf, otherwiſe I will be as a reed ſhaken with the wind, and a leaf driven to and fro. Alas, my heart is like Reuben, unſtable as water, O if it were liquid as water, that I might like Hannah pour it out in prayer before the Lord!

Lord, preſerve any degree of ſoftneſs of heart, or liveline ſ frame, which thou haſt wrought in me by thy own ordi nce, and help me to improve it, otherwiſe the devil and the orld will ſoon come and lull me aſleep, take away the living ild, and leave a dead one in its room. Skreen me from the

cold chilling blaſts, that come from the devil and the world, that my love be not frozen up: but let the ſouth winds of the Spirit come, and kindly breathe upon any ſpark of grace thou haſt kindled, cheriſh convictions, preſerve good motions, and encourage deſires. O maintain the fire of thy love in me, by the oil of thy gracious influences. Let the name of Jeſus be always to me as precious ointment poured forth, that I may remember his love more than wine. And let the remembrance of his love be ſtill efficacious to melt my hard heart, enliven my dead ſoul, and inflame my cold breaſt with a burning affection to him. O let the charms of my Redeemer's love triumph over all the charms of ſin's pleaſures, and Satan's devices, and cauſe me to reject all their ſolicitations with diſdain and abhorrence. I have ſeen Chriſt's love in bleeding to death on the curſed tree, to deliver me from lying in hell; O let me never again wilfully walk in the road that leads to it. I have ſeen him wreſtling in an agony to open heaven's gates for me, let me never turn my back on heaven, and tell him by my unworthy carriage he might have ſaved his labours. O let me never requite the kindneſs of my glorious friend at this rate.

O that I could ſpend my life in admiring Chriſt's love, and contemplating his beauty: Surely he is the 'Roſe of Sha-'ron,' yea, the moſt beautiful roſe in all the garden of God, and that roſe that beautifies all the flowers in the garden. How charming is his beauty, and how fragrant is his ſmell! One leaf of this fragrant roſe is ſufficient to perfume the whole creation. O let the roſe come and perfume my ill-ſmelled heart, and ill-ſavoured performances, that God may not reject both me and them. Let the ſweet ſavour of Chriſt's ſacrifice, and the odour of his interceſſion, ſo diffuſe itſelf, and fill heaven, that the evil ſavour of my ſins and duties may not enter. Surely if it were not for that ſweet perfume, God would not ſuffer ſuch a ſtinking dung-hill as I am, to approach ſo near him, and be as a ſmoke in his noſtrils all the day. O if the wind of the Spirit would but blow the ſweet ſmell of Sharon's roſe on my unſavoury affections and withered ſoul, it would ſoon revive and bloſſom as the roſe, and the ſcent thereof be as the wine of Lebanon.

MEDITATION VIII.

HOW marvellous is it, that the glorious bridegroom, Chriſt, whoſe beauty is ſurpaſſing, his kingdom mighty, and his riches infinite, that ſuch an one ſhould offer to match with uncomely ſouls, and court a bride naturally as black as hell; yea, ſeek her through a ſea of blood, through the pains of death, the torments of hell, and horrors of the grave: that he ſhould follow me in my wanderings, through the wilderneſs of ſin, with his alluring invitations and goſpel-offers; yea, preſent me with the rings and bracelets of his precious promiſes and Spirit's conſolations, and all to win my heart, and gain my conſent to him! 'He is my Lord and my God.' Can my heart be but raviſhed with his love; he took ſhame and gave me glory; he took the curſe, and gave me the bleſſing; he took death, and gave me life; he took my ſins, and gave his righteouſneſs! O wonderful and happy exchange for my ſoul, that was ready to periſh; my ſoul's bleſſing be evermore upon his head, that made this exchange with me! O that I may be more and more acquainted with him, and the way of ſalvation through his righteouſneſs and ſtrength. Let me ſtill deſire to go out of myſelf that I may be found in him, not having my own righteouſneſs, but that which is through the faith of him. Let me always ſit under the ſhadow of this tree of life, which yields the richeſt fruits, and O let theſe fruits be ſweet to my taſte. Bleſſed Jeſus, thou art my life, my ſtrength, my wiſdom, my riches, my light, my health, my joy, my glory, and my all. Be thou never far from me; but give me faith always to live in thee, and depend on thee.

Lord, pity theſe poor ſouls who have been watching for the Son of David, as he paſſed by in the ordinances; and yet are complaining, their eyes have not ſeen the King in his beauty: O draw by the vail, and ſhew thyſelf to them. Lord, when thou ſheweſt thyſelf, let me love thee; and when thou withdraweſt thyſelf, let me follow thee, and lament after thee.

Lord, multiply the children of Zion, the ſons born in thy houſe, even theſe who are begotten again to a lively hope. And when the Lord ſhall count and write up the people, may it be written of many in this land, this man and that woman was born there.

Alas, for the unſucceſsfulneſs of ſermons and ſacraments in this age! Q where is the power and life that uſed to accompany ſolemn ordinances? Where are theſe breathings, pantings, mournings, meltings, longings, and heavenly frames that wont to be ſeen at ſuch occaſions. The day was, that one ſermon hath pricked ſome thouſands to the heart; but now many ſermons are preached and ſacraments diſpenſed, and ſcarce any pricked to the heart for ſin.

Lord, haſten antichriſt's downfal: remove that mother and miſtreſs of abominations in the earth. Take graven images and ſuperſtition out of the way, and bring in the Jews in troops. Let the time come when this church ſhall ſing for joy, when Scotland's moon ſhall ſhine like the light of the ſun, and her ſun like the light of ſeven days in one. Come and lay her ſtones with fair colours, and her foundations with ſapphires: make her windows of agates, and her gates carbuncles. Let the name of our cities be, *Jehovah Shammah*, The Lord is there; and the inſcription of the people's lives be, *holineſs to the Lord*. O that the pleaſant flowers may appear, and the time of the ſinging of birds may come. Amen.

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THE END.

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